



State of Montana

Strategic Two-Year Plan

For Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998

and the Wagner Peyser Act

**For the period of
JULY 1, 2007 to JUNE 30, 2009**

Montana State Workforce Investment Board
Brian Schweitzer, Governor

State Plan

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Plan Development Process

Describe in one page or less, the process for developing the State Plan.

1. *Include (a) a discussion of the involvement of the Governor and the State Board in the development of the plan, and (b) a description of the manner in which the State Board collaborated with economic development, education, the business community and other interested parties in the development of the State Plan. (112(b)(1).)*
2. *Include a description of how the State handled public comments. (111(g) and 112(b)(9).)*

January 3, 2005, Governor Schweitzer became Montana's 22nd Governor. Appointments to the Governor's State Workforce Investment Board were made in August 2005. The State Board has worked to prepare the plan through its Executive Committee, which has the authority to act on behalf of the State Board. The Chair of the State Board and its Executive Committee instructed State Board staff to coordinate with the collaborative partners to develop the plan content and write the compliance oriented elements.

State Board staff have worked with staff from the Governor's Office, the State Board Chair, and mandatory State partner organizations to discuss elements of the plan, including the Governor's vision and strategies and how to align those to meet the federal strategic goals and priorities. In addition, the State Board staff participates on a State Agency Management Team comprised of lead agency officials from the Departments of Labor and Industry, Commerce, Public Health and Human Services including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation, the Office of Public Instruction, and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. State Board staff worked to incorporate key elements of the plan and to ensure collaboration of State partners in its development.

The State Board solicited input and suggestions from State Board members, appropriate state agency staff including: Department of Labor and Industry's Workforce Services Division (Workforce Technology Bureau, Job Service Operations Bureau, Commissioner's Office, the Labor Market Information Bureau, and the WIA Oversight Bureau), Department of Public Health and Human Services, Department of Commerce, the Governor's Office, Secondary and Post Secondary Education, and other interested persons. The Executive Committee met on March 20, 2007 to discuss the draft plan in a public forum and obtained input from interested parties and members of the public.

On April 2, 2007 the proposed plan was published over the website in draft form and made available for a two week public comment period. The State Board Executive Committee met again on April 20, 2007 to incorporate final suggestions and comments into the plan, as appropriate, and to formally approve modifications to the States WIA and Wagner Peyser two-year strategic plan.

I. State Vision

Describe Governor's Vision for a Statewide Workforce Investment System. Provide a summary articulating the Governor's vision for utilizing the resources of the workforce system in support of the State's economic development that addresses the issues and questions below. States are encouraged to attach more detailed documents to expand upon any aspect of the summary response if available. (112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).

A. What are the State's economic development goals for attracting, retaining and growing business and industry within the State? (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)

Governor Schweitzer has an ambitious economic vision for a "New Day" in Montana. Montana is not a single economy; it is comprised of several regional economies. The golden crescent, or the Cowboy Boot, is an area that starts in the Northwest, flows south through Missoula and the Bitterroot, turns East through Helena and the Gallatin, and ends in Billings. Within this core, Montana has some of the most robust economic development any place in the country particularly within the manufacturing and hi-tech industries. Population growth is rapid in the area west of the golden crescent, where the economy is also sustained by forestry and wood products and hard rock mining. Central Montana's economy is based on agriculture, and southern and eastern Montana's economies are rooted in mining, gas, and oil development in addition to agriculture. The seven Indian reservations' economies all impact the State's overall economy with the revenues they generate, their rapidly growing populations and their unique employment challenges. Governor Schweitzer wants to show the rest of the nation that Montana is at the center of our future energy development to include: windpower, biofuels like ethanol and bio-diesel, natural gas and oil, and advanced uses of coal for clean and green electrical power and liquid fuels.

Montana's varied and widely dispersed economic assets have led to its name as the Treasure State. One of Governor Schweitzer's priorities -- to align resources and strategies to promote efficient, safe, and responsible development -- led to his 2005 effort to bring over 700 people to the Montana Symposium: Energy Future of the West. Governor Schweitzer's vision is to join all the provinces and states that surround Montana, to align resources and industry to add value to the raw materials our region produces, particularly in the field of renewable fuels.

Governor Schweitzer's administration is committed to policies and strategies that will encourage additional system integration and further promote the development of a seamless one-stop system in which Employment Services plays a critical role as the primary job matching resource for employers and job seekers. In addition, the state is committed to investments in K-12 and post secondary education, especially 2-year colleges and apprenticeships, and better integrating education into the one-stop system to effectively meet business and industry needs, especially in high growth, high demand, and higher wage occupations.

In recognition of the importance of the state to work cooperatively with tribal governments a memorandum of understanding outlining working relationships has been approved by both the State Workforce Investment Board and tribal government leaders. The annual Labor Day Report for the first time includes reservation economic data for all seven reservations and in addition new Reservation Economic Fliers (Featured Labor Information & Economic Research Statistics) have been developed and produced for each reservation.

Montana continues to be innovative and flexible in order to provide high quality services in a seamless, demand driven system. This requires collaborative partnerships both in Montana and with our surrounding provinces and states, to build integrated service delivery, eliminate duplication, and provide access to the fullest array of services through a comprehensive, demand-driven One-Stop System.

This vision continues to become reality, as Montana works to implement Governor Schweitzer's WIRED grant project. This grant is part of a demonstrated system transformation, integrating workforce and economic development in 32 rural counties in Montana including six Indian reservations. Montana's WIRED grant project is implementing a system transformation through the development of a bioproduct and agro-fuels industry cluster. The WIRED project is part of the Governor's vision for economic development outside the boot, which focuses on shifting from an agrarian economy to one that is based upon energy development in bioproducts, wind, coal, oil and gas.

Montana is committed to expanding upon its resource-based economic structure to promote a Value-Added Economy. To do so, we will continue to invest in K-12 and higher education and promote business and industries that provide living-wage jobs that will keep our citizens living and working in Montana. The State continues to promote policies and incentives to attract and retain business and industry in Montana, including the film industry. We are working on a strategy to entice film-makers to utilize the resources available in Montana for filming major motion pictures, thereby promoting local businesses, services, and economies.

Job creation in new and expanding industries is also a priority of Governor Schweitzer. Montana is committed to directing resources to promote skills training for occupations in high-growth, high demand industries, including: alternative energy; value added agriculture; natural resources; building trades; healthcare; and technology based fields including bioscience, information technology, and aerospace.

Governor Schweitzer reinstated the Made in Montana program to promote awareness and enhance the marketing of local businesses and entrepreneurs. According to the Department of Labor and Industry's (DLI) Bureau of Research and Analysis, approximately 97.8% of all private businesses in Montana are considered small businesses and have fewer than 500 employees.

Governor Schweitzer will continue to work with the Small Business Administration to promote the Federal government's HUBZone program in Montana.

B. Given that a skilled workforce is a key to the economic success of every business, what is the Governor's vision for maximizing and leveraging the broad array of Federal and State resources available for workforce investment flowing through the State's cabinet agencies and/or education agencies in order to ensure a skilled workforce for the State's business and industry? (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)

Governor Schweitzer's vision for maximizing and leveraging limited resources for workforce investment is, in a word, collaboration. In today's environment, it is likely that no one institution, organization, or business can effectively address the range of workforce issues in a community. The systems approach promotes collaboration and leverages resources across public and private groups.

In order to leverage the most dollars for services, cooperation and collaboration is essential. Montana is working to eliminate duplication and gain efficiency through policy development in the State Plan, through the work of the State Board, and through communications with state agency leaders, and workforce system partners. Governor Schweitzer has also charged his cabinet with improving coordination with the Office of Public Instruction and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education to better coordinate education, workforce and economic development. The Governor established the Best & Brightest scholarships to Montana students for need-based aid for study in high demand fields.

One of Governor Schweitzer's priorities for collaboration is to respect the government to government relationship with the Indian Nations of Montana. Because the seven reservations in Montana host over 600 small businesses in a variety of industries contributing to the state's economy, collaborating with Tribal Colleges to promote consistent statewide curriculum development and career ladders in new and emerging industries will ensure a skilled workforce and job opportunities for American Indians both on and off reservations.

Another priority for collaboration will be to increase partnerships with Faith Based and community organizations in our State. Montana's Governor is committed to working to empower more of America's families, schools, and faith-based and community organizations to address some of our toughest social problems and help those most in need, and Montana will be innovative and creative in our efforts to build strong ties to these organizations working to assist people in local communities every day. These organizations bring strong community ties, and provide a key aspect of the workforce system with their history of serving the population most at risk.

Members of the Governor's cabinet continue to endorse a State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor's Office of Economic Development, the Departments of Labor and Industry, which includes representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison; Commerce; Public Health and Human Services, including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation; Office of Public Instruction; Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least once a month to improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services.

Montana will strive to build a partnership with the Montana Commission on Community Service. This organization was established in 1993 by the Governor and the Montana Legislature, and seeks to renew the ethic of civic responsibility by encouraging citizens of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service. They also involve youth in the life and work of communities, and expand service opportunities for all Montanans. The Commission is a diverse, non-partisan, and Governor appointed body representing a broad cross-section of community service interests and statewide leadership in Montana. The Commission's administrative arm, the Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS), is a state agency funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the State of Montana, and various private donations. By working closely with this organization, Montana may be able to leverage additional resources to include staff and matching funds to promote workforce development efforts.

In addition, the State Workforce Investment Board will examine the statewide workforce investment system to determine where improvements can be made in service delivery in small, rural or reservation communities to ensure funds are allocated in a manner that best represents the interests of all businesses and citizens in Montana.

C. Given the continuously changing skill needs that business and industry have as a result of innovation and new technology, what is the Governor's vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce? (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)

One of Governor Schweitzer's first actions as Governor was to increase State investment in the Education System. Montana is committed to ensuring education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce by investing the maximum resources available, and by increasing cooperation and communication among all entities. Education is a vital partner in the workforce system as they promote the demand driven system by ensuring timely response to training and education needs at the local level. Montana will also explore investments in the development of Career Ladders and lattices to encourage a career model of learning, and will work to introduce these models at both the middle school and high school levels. In addition, a priority will be to promote and increase the relationship between the workforce system, Apprenticeship, and 2-year education to encourage curriculum development and training in Montana's high growth, high demand occupations.

In June 2006, the SWIB Apprenticeship Advisory Committee developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of all interested parties in structuring a technical education programs that would allow for a seamless transition from a 2-year AAS degree to an existing registered apprenticeship. The intent of the MOU is to ensure that Montana will be prepared to meet the demand for a highly-skilled technical workforce now and into the future. The MOU was developed in open meetings to gain input from the public. Signatures to the MOU were as follows: SWIB Chair, SWIB Apprenticeship Advisory Committee Chair, Commissioner of the Office of Higher Education, Superintendent of the Office of Public Instruction, State Director to Workforce Development and 2-year Education , Commissioner of the State Department of Labor & Industry and the Apprenticeship & Training Director of the Department of Labor & Industry. To date, employer-driven advisory committees have utilized the MOU for Flathead Valley Community College and MSU-Northern to develop agreements for electrical and plumbing programs.

Governor Schweitzer also encourages improved development and delivery of workforce information through the One-Stop System. This practice will: support the State Workforce Investment Board and their strategic planning; provide tools that support business and economic growth within a demand-driven system; and increase the effectiveness of career guidance to students, job seekers, and counselors.

In recognition of the importance of the state to work cooperatively with tribal governments a memorandum of understanding outlining working relationships has been approved by both the State Workforce Investment Board and Tribal government leaders.

D. What is the Governor's vision for bringing together the key players in workforce development including business and industry, economic development, education, and the public workforce system to continuously identify the workforce challenges facing the State and to develop innovative strategies and solutions that effectively leverage resources to address those challenges? (§112(b)(10).)

Governor Schweitzer continues to build upon the valiant efforts of Montana's workforce development system by appointing new State Board members selected from key high growth, high demand industries in Montana. These industries include alternative energy, value added agriculture, natural

resources, healthcare, and technology based fields including bioscience, information technology, and aerospace. Governor Schweitzer selects appointees from across Montana to ensure representation from the many different economic and demographic areas of our State. These business leaders work with the mandatory program and State Agency partners on the State Board to identify the workforce challenges facing the State and to develop innovative strategies and solutions that effectively leverage resources to address those challenges. The Governor and his State Board support the following initiatives.

Governor Schweitzer continues to improve coordination within state government and also between state government and other groups. Partnerships continue to improve with the workforce system and the university system. An historic MOU between the university system and Montana's apprenticeship program was signed to achieve the end goal of improving outcomes for Montana workers and coordinating systems to use resources efficiently.

In recognition of the importance of the state to work cooperatively with tribal governments a memorandum of understanding outlining working relationships has been approved by both the State Workforce Investment Board and tribal government leaders.

Members of the Governor's cabinet continue to endorse a State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor's Office of Economic Development, the Departments of Labor and Industry (including representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison), Commerce, Public Health and Human Services (including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation), Office of Public Instruction, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least quarterly to identify and discuss issues of mutual interest, and improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services. Goals of the Team include analyzing and exploring options to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of Montana's Workforce Development System; identifying and analyzing waiver options; and implementing inter-departmental directives that identify specific expectations of coordination efforts with local and regional economic development organizations.

Montana will work to better develop and utilize the roles of business and industry representation on the State Board. Montana will explore the possibility of coordinating task forces comprised of members of the State Board to bring together business and industry to identify workforce challenges and develop collaborative strategies and solutions. The State Board formed a Health Care Task Force in the Spring of 2006; the task force was charged to explore and report on health care workforce shortages around the state. This type of reporting will be integrated into the decision-making process of the various entities around the state responsible for addressing Montana's workforce.

State Board Strategic Planning is scheduled for the Spring of 2007. This will ensure continued cooperation and collaboration for system partners, and provide an opportunity to define performance for systems management. This will also better align resources to identify workforce challenges, and provide a forum for the development of solutions.

Governor Schweitzer is the chairman of the Board of Education, and also serves as ex-officio on the Board of Regents and the Board of Public Education. Under the Board of Education, Governor Schweitzer has established a Kindergarten to College working group that is tasked with addressing the issues of preparing students for a 21st century workforce in Montana.

E. What is the Governor's vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including the youth most in need, such as out of school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farmworker youth, and other youth at risk? (§112 (b)(18)(A).)

Governor Schweitzer is committed to creating a collaborative approach to prepare youth for success in a global, demand-driven economy through coordination among agencies concentrating on alternative education, demand-driven models and youth most in need. This is the vision shared by the U.S. Departments of Labor, Education, Justice and Health and Human Services. .

In May 2006, the Youth Council was formed. The Youth Council is an ad hoc council of the State Board comprised of members who have been identified as experts in youth programs and services. Representation includes Juvenile Justice, Job Corps, Education, Indian Affairs, Special Education, Youth Service Providers, US Probation, and the State Board.

Collaboration is being promoted at the State level through the Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision and the SWIB Youth Council. The Team currently has youth leaders representing foster care, education, WIA Title IB youth programs, and juvenile justice from the State of Montana Departments of Labor and Industry, Office of Public Instruction, Department of Corrections, Board of Crime Control, Department of Public Health and Human Services and representatives from Montana's two local workforce area youth councils and their administrative entity. As other agencies with youth interests are identified the Team will invite them to participate in the planning process.

II. State Workforce Investment Priorities

Identify the Governor's key workforce investment priorities for the State's public workforce system and how each will lead to actualizing the Governor's vision for workforce and economic development. (§§111(d)(2) and 112 (a).)

The Governor's key workforce investment priorities for Montana's public workforce system are:

1. **Expand Montana's One-Stop System.**

Montana recognizes that integration of services is key to an effective, cost-efficient system. Montana has achieved its goal to certify a minimum of one One-Stop in each of Montana's 12 Montana Association of Counties (MACo) Districts, excluding District 8 and 12, within the two years plan period. Within Districts 8 and 12, Montana certified two One-Stop Systems within the last two years. This represents an effort by Montana to expand the One-Stop System. Montana currently has 11 certified One-Stop Systems. One One-Stop Systems is in the final stages of certification. To date, four additional One-Stop System business plans are under staff review. Montana will continue to promote and expand the One-Stop System.

This strategy includes promoting the role of Community Management Teams (CMTs). Community Management Teams were organized under the original WIA 5-Year State Plan in regions – areas within a hundred miles of a community that offers workforce development services. The CMTs include mandatory and many optional partners. Under the guidance and

support of the Private Industry Councils and the State, those original CMTs began the process of preparing for One-stop certification under the WIA of 1998.

Promoting the role of the CMTs under the State 2-Year Plan will afford maximum flexibility for local development of the certified One-Stop System. MACo will be encouraged to play a greater role in collaborating with CMTs, Job Service Employer Councils (JSECs), the State Board, and regional and local economic development organizations, and to participate in the development of the one-stop system at the most local level.

- a. Co-location of One-Stop Centers will be encouraged, however Virtual One-Stops and affiliate sites are allowable under this plan where local CMTs and the State Board determine it is in the best interest of the community, or when it is not financially or otherwise reasonable to co-locate. The focus for this two-year period will be to continue to provide access to services, not to a single “site”.
- b. The State Board developed minimum statewide criteria for One-Stop Certification, taking into account the work performed by local boards under the original 5-year plan. Prior to Montana’s transition to a single planning area the local boards worked diligently to develop and implement One-Stop Certification criteria, and the State Board incorporated much of the local boards’ efforts. The current Process and Criteria are attached as Attachment D.
- c. A list of definitions is attached hereto as Attachment G.

This will actualize the Governor’s vision to coordinate and integrate services to effectively leverage local resources and meet needs at the local level.

2. Collaboration of Partners and Integration of Services.

Montana and the State Board will encourage integration of services and collaborative partnerships wherever possible to expand services and ensure the most cost effective use of funding by reducing duplication. Current strategies include the following:

- o The State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development is comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor’s Office of Economic Opportunity, the Departments of Labor and Industry that include representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison, Commerce, Public Health and Human Services including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Public Instruction, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least once a month to identify and discuss issues of mutual interest, and improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services. In this way, the Team works to enhance workforce development coordination and communication efforts among state agencies and promote the merits of integration of workforce development programs administered by state agencies.
- o Montana intends to begin implementation of the Integrated Performance Information (IPI) Blueprint that was generated as a result of the US Department of Labor sponsored “IPI Project”. This will require information sharing across agencies and programs, ensure common reporting for performance systems management, and encourage partnerships at all levels of the workforce system. While the full scale vision of implementation as not yet been realized, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), and Research & Analysis (R &A), using UI data,

have been collaborating on data exchange. The data exchange is used to help with the assessment of performance and outcomes for planning purposes in the post-secondary education system.

- The Governor has tasked the State Board with pursuing strategies or solutions to target the Native American population in Montana in an effort to better serve the unique workforce and economic development needs found on the Reservations. The State Board will continue to consider provisions that complement and align with the provisions of WIA Section 166. The Statewide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the One-Stop Delivery System, entered into between the SWIB, required partner agencies, voluntary partner agencies, Tribal Government Leaders, and the Governor of Montana. The purpose of the MOU is to establish cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships between the required partners and others whose participation has been determined to be vital to an effective One-Stop Delivery System. For the first time in history, all Montana Tribal entities have signed a common statewide WIA MOU.
- Montana was one of six states that participated in the National Governor's Association (NGA) State Policy Academy on Creating the Next Generation of Workforce Development Policy. The Academy was a highly interactive team-based process for crafting policy strategies and solutions to complex policy challenges. The NGA Academy Team was comprised of high-level representatives of workforce development, education, business, and economic development organizations. The final report from the Academy was submitted to Montana's Governor in October 2004 citing several recommendations. The Montana Team continues their work beyond the sponsorship of the NGA Academy project assisting with the implementation of the recommendations, and enhancing opportunities for successful workforce development strategies.
- To align with the federal direction of innovation, Montana will seek out new and creative partnerships, such as with the Montana Commission on Community Service. This organization was established in 1993 by the Governor and the Montana Legislature, and seeks to renew the ethic of civic responsibility by encouraging citizens of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service. They also involve youth in the life and work of communities, and expand service opportunities for all Montanans.

The Commission is a diverse, non-partisan, and Governor appointed body representing a broad cross-section of community service interests and statewide leadership in Montana. The Commission's administrative arm, the Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS), is a state agency funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the State of Montana, and various private donations. By working closely with this organization, Montana may be able to leverage additional resources to include staff and matching funds to promote workforce development efforts.

- In an effort to align with the federal strategic priority of a flexible and demand driven workforce system, Montana will work to promote and develop a "Business One-Stop" concept. The Flathead Regional Business Center will serve as a model of business assistance services, and advocates that coordination of business resources, one-stop access, and the co-location of programs is the best way to serve the business sectors of their region. On-site partners include: The Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Center, Job Service Business Advocates, Community College, Department of Commerce Regional Development Officer, Manufacturing Extension Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, Regional Convention & Visitor Bureau, and fourteen additional "virtual" partners who are off site.

Communities or regions that have the desire and ability to implement a Business One-Stop will have maximum flexibility to do so. Cooperation with the State Board and CMTs is encouraged, as is customization of the One-Stop (virtual or physical) based upon the partners available in the region, available infrastructure and resources, etc. The State Board will develop “best practices” and disseminate and market the information to local areas, including Labor Market Information products. The State Board will also identify and direct technical assistance to the extent possible, and encourages the inclusion of Local and Regional economic development organizations in development of the Business One-Stop model.

- In a further effort to align with the federal strategic priority of a flexible and demand driven workforce system, Montana, through its State Board, will work to promote Workforce Learning Academies for delivery to the state’s labor market areas. Workforce Learning Academies are designed to build a competitive, promotable, and sustainable workforce by addressing the issues of recruiting, training, and retaining skilled workers. Additionally, this may be used as a forum for identifying the skills sets that will be needed in different regions of the state to begin preparing for the skills shortage.

Academies have two phases: 1) Conducting research to better understand the challenges businesses encounter as they hire, train, and retain employees, and 2) Academies where national and local experts discuss challenging employment issues and successful employment practices. The goal of the Academies is for business owners and human resource professionals to come away with solid ideas about workable systems that can maximize the potential of new and existing workers in local labor market areas. These Academies have been successfully implemented in Kalispell, Bozeman, and Helena and these communities can serve as a model for a statewide rollout.

- An additional effort which aligns with the federal strategic priority of a flexible and demand driven workforce system is the Business Expansion and Retention Programs (BEAR) being developed across the State of Montana. The model BEAR program began in Yellowstone County as a collaborative effort of Big Sky EDA, the Billings Area Chamber of Commerce, Billings Job Service Workforce Center, Montana State University - Billings, Montana Manufacturing Extension Center, Montana Department of Commerce, NorthWestern Energy, and Beartooth RC&D. The BEAR Program reaches out directly to individual businesses. The BEAR personnel interview the subject business to identify challenges, assesses the challenges facing the business, and provides appropriate resources in a timely manner to solve those challenges, allowing the business to expand or to remain a viable entity in the community. The model BEAR Program assists businesses with Workforce Development, Scholarships for Incumbent Worker Training, Human Resource and Personnel Management, Financing, Manufacturing Consulting, Marketing, Business Plan Development, Information Technology and many other areas.

Aggregate data on labor market and workforce needs are gathered and provided to MSU - Billings (MSU-B) and MSU-Billings College of Technology (MSU-B COT). The flow of aggregate data on workforce needs aligns with the Governor’s vision of a fully involved education system as a vital partner who can provide timely, demand driven training and educational solutions at the local level. The links developed between employers, 2-year education and BEAR promote the development of helpful relationships within the workforce system.

The State Board is committed to promoting “best practices” for partnerships such as those exhibited in the BEAR Program, and will work to disseminate and market-relevant information and strategies to local areas. The State Board will also encourage the participation of CMTs, and local and regional economic development organizations in the formation and operation of partnerships. Montana has identified 12 Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs) for the purpose of regional economic growth and regional coordination. To date, the BEAR program has been implemented in communities within nine regions, and is in the discussion and planning phases in several communities throughout all regions.

These strategies will attain the Governor’s vision of creating a flexible, seamless, demand driven system that addresses high growth, high demand occupation training needs, while minimizing wasteful duplication of services. In addition, the strategies will promote efficiency across programs and through the system to deliver the most financial and other resources to the local level, and provides access to the largest array of services. Montana is committed to becoming a demand-driven system that successfully raises customer awareness and usage of the workforce system by integrating services and marketing principles that will create business solutions that both employers and the workforce value highly.

3. Increased use of waivers to address rural needs in Montana.

Montana will research and use as much flexibility as possible through the use of waivers to address local workforce needs specific to a rural state and its rural communities. Montana’s low population density, coupled with the nation’s fourth largest geographic area, puts the State in a position to take advantage of the use of waivers to be innovative in our approach to meet these unique rural needs. Montana will follow federal requirements for applying for waivers under the Workforce Investment Act.

4. Improved development and delivery of workforce information.

Montana will work to improve the development and delivery of workforce information by: continuing to promote Labor Market Information (LMI) training for state board members , state agency staff, workforce system professionals, and One-Stop staff; better support the state workforce board and their strategic planning; provide tools that support business and economic growth; and offer quality career guidance to students, job seekers, and counselors through the One-Stop System. Additional products developed include:

The Snapshot publication is produced annually and distributed to: partners in the Workforce Development System, One-Stop Systems, Job Service Workforce Centers, local Community Management Teams, Economic Development Organizations, Education, and other interested persons. The Snapshot defines and describes the work of the State Workforce Investment Board, where Montanan’s can access workforce development services, describes the Workforce Development System, and explains how the workforce system is funded and where the dollars are spent.

The Labor Day Report is published annually by Montana DLI providing an overview of Montana’s economy, including in depth topics such as: County Industry/Economic Diversity, Industry and Occupational Projections (2004-2014), Reservation Economic Data, and Wage Distribution.

5. Eliminate duplicative administrative systems and maximize opportunities for training.

In 2005, Governor Schweitzer transitioned Montana to a single state-wide planning area. In order to move Montana in that direction, the Governor named two workforce areas within the state designated to function as a single statewide planning area. By doing so, Montana reduced overhead costs in the local areas from 20% to 4% after the transition year, a reduction of over \$1 million that is now available to the local areas to deliver services. This efficiency maximizes the available money directed to training and services to business and job seekers in the face of the severe federal budget cuts experienced by the state in the last several years.

The new statewide regional planning structure enhanced efforts to transform the system into a demand-driven system, and aligned with 3 of the priorities set forth in the original Strategic 2-Year Plan to: expand the One-Stop System, increase collaboration of partners and integration of services, and increase the use of Waivers to address rural needs in Montana. In addition, the fifth priority identified was added as part of the Plan Modification submitted and approved in September, 2005.

This priority required Montana to request a Waiver to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a state board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area.

III. State Governance Structure

A. *Organization of State agencies in relation to the Governor:*

1. *Provide an organizational chart that delineates the relationship to the Governor of the agencies involved in the public workforce investment system, including education and economic development and the required and optional One-Stop partner programs managed by each agency.*
2. *In a narrative describe how the agencies involved in the public workforce investment system interrelate on workforce and economic development issues and the respective lines of authority.*

The Governor appoints a Commissioner or Director for the agencies identified in the chart, who are members of the Governor's cabinet. As such, they meet weekly with the Governor, to allow for communication of issues and collaboration on solutions. Within the agencies, an Administrator oversees each Division and reports to the Commissioner or Director.

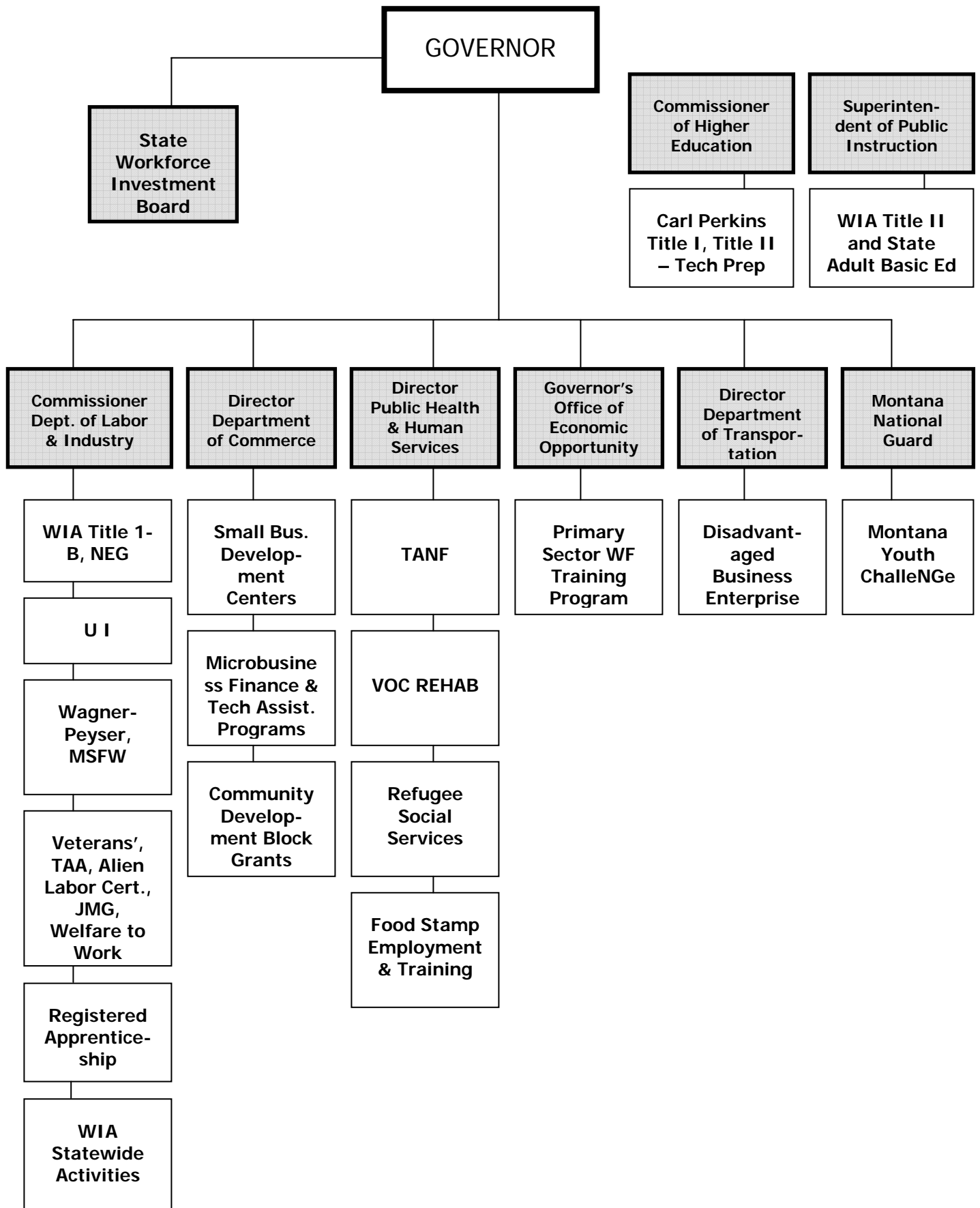
The Superintendent of Public Instruction is a state-wide elected position and oversees workforce education programs such as Adult Basic Education and K-12. The Commissioner of Higher Education is a competitively hired position. The Commissioner of Higher Education oversees certain vocational and economic development funding that is used by two-year colleges to develop and provide curriculum.

Representatives from the above organizations are appointed members of the State Board, and senior staff for these agencies participate on the State Agency Management Team for

Workforce Development. All parties, in conjunction with the business majority on the state board, collaborate in developing policy for Montana's workforce investment system.

The Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau, within the Department of Labor and Industry, represents the Governor by overseeing and monitoring all aspects of Title 1B of the federal Workforce Investment Act. On behalf of the Governor, the Bureau ensures that programs have a high level of accountability and are following all requirements of the federal act with regard to performance outcomes and customer satisfaction measures. The Bureau is required to validate, track, and report that information to the US Department of Labor; and these outcomes can in turn influence funding levels for Montana. Additionally, the Bureau negotiates program indicators used to measure performance and the results for the Workforce Investment Act and other programs such as Wagner-Peyser. The Bureau tracks and measures customers' usage of services, as well as their satisfaction with those services. Long-term outcomes are measured for individuals who access the system, and are used to determine if the system is on track and program operators are providing the best services to Montanans.

Please see next page.



B. State Workforce Investment Board (§112(b)(1).)

- 1. Describe the organization and structure of the State Board. (§111.)*
- 2. Identify the organizations or entities represented on the State Board. If you are using an alternative entity which does not contain all the members required under section 111(b)(1), describe how each of the entities required under this section will be involved in planning and implementing the State's workforce investment system as envisioned in WIA. How is the alternative entity achieving the State's WIA goals? (§111(a-c), 111(e), and 112(b)(1).)*

The current State Board is comprised of 34 members; 19 private sector members, 6 public representatives from state government and education, and 12 members who represent elected officials, labor, community based organizations, economic development, and other mandatory partners.

The private sector members are representative from some of Montana's largest industries including: mining; wood products and timber; PPL Montana and Northwestern Energy; the Montana Hospital Association; and the construction industry. In addition to private sector members, board representation includes members from: Local economic development corporations; Montana State Chamber of Commerce; Chief Elected Officials (county commissioners); community based organizations; the Governor's Office of Economic Development; Montana State AFL-CIO; the Commissioner of Higher Education, and the Director of 2-Year Education and Workforce Development; Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation); Montana Department of Labor and Industry, representing employment services, employment statistic information, Veterans and veterans' employment programs, employment and training, and unemployment insurance; Montana State Senate; Montana State House of Representatives; Human Resource Development Council (agency with expertise in workforce investment and youth activities); Job Corps, and Tribal representatives.

The current Board was appointed by Governor Schweitzer in August, 2005. Appointment terms are up in June, 2007. We anticipate some new membership for the next two-year service period of July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009.

The Governor considered the transition to a single statewide planning area when making appointments to the State Board in August 2005, and the SWIB was restructured to: incorporate additional private sector members to ensure a business majority and increase the representation of key industries; ensure local elected officials are represented on the SWIB; ensure geographic representation, with the goal of increased local involvement and influence.

During PY 05, the SWIB formed a Youth Council. They are established as a committee that functions collaboratively under the direction of the SWIB. Attachment H reflects the WIA organizational structure based upon a single statewide planning area.

The State Board has two officers who are appointed by the Governor: The Chair and the Vice-Chair, and their offices are of an indeterminate length. The Chair and Vice-Chair are members of the private sector and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Chair has the

responsibility to call and preside at all State Board meetings and perform other duties as required. The Vice-Chair acts as the Chair in the Chair's absence and performs other duties as required.

The State Board accomplishes its work through a committee structure comprised of four (4) standing committees, one ad hoc committee, one ad-hoc council, and task forces and work groups as required. The four standing committees perform continuing functions and are comprised of State Board members. The ad-hoc committee, council, task forces, and work groups are appointed by the State Board Chair to carry out specified tasks and to perform a specific function. The ad-hoc committee does include members who are not appointed members of the State Board, but the majority must constitute State Board members. Chairs of the ad-hoc council, task forces, and work groups are SWIB members; other members are identified as experts in their field. A brief description of the State Board's standing and ad hoc committees and councils follows:

Executive Committee: The Executive Committee is comprised of the officers and no more than ten at-large representatives, and is composed of a majority of business members. The at-large representatives of the Executive Committee shall be members of the State Workforce Board and are appointed by the Chair. At-large members are appointed for one-year terms and may serve multiple terms. The Executive Committee has all of the authority of the State Workforce Board whenever State Workforce Board action is required.

Economic Development and Business Retention Committee: The Economic Development and Business Retention Committee has adopted the charge of determining the specific workforce needs of businesses statewide, and developing strategies to address those needs. They work to engage employers of the state, in a sector-by-sector approach, to determine the specific needs of each sector, and prioritize training needs and encourage directing state training funds to address those needs.

One-Stop Development Committee: The One-Stop Development Committee is a temporary committee and is responsible for coordinating and implementing strategies to expand the One-Stop System. Strategies will be developed for promoting local involvement and input for One-Stop development, especially with Community Management Teams (CMTs). Initially, this committee will be tasked with selecting and certifying One-Stops. Once the One-Stop development process is in place, another board committee can absorb the remaining duties.

Workforce Systems (Regulatory) Committee: The Workforce Systems Committee has been merged with the Performance and Accountability Committee. Their charge is to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the Governor's and the State Board's strategic workforce development plans through the actions and operational directives of the state's executive agencies. They ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing workforce development programs, and bring policy issues and recommendations to the State Board. In addition, this committee develops meaningful accountability measures for Montana's workforce development system. Measures will be used to evaluate the training programs, workforce-planning efforts, and the services offered through the One-Stop system in the State. They have coordinated with the

Integrated Performance Information (IPI) project and will work to incorporate the IPI Blueprint into common performance measurement in Montana's workforce development system. They also work to design and implement products that provide quality intelligence and clearly communicate, at all levels and across programs, the progress and performance of the workforce system

Ad Hoc Apprenticeship Advisory Committee: The Montana Apprenticeship Advisory Committee is an ad hoc committee of the State Board, comprised of a majority of State Board members, with ad hoc committee members who are apprenticeship sponsors and business owners, with expertise in apprenticeable occupations. They are committed to partnering with business, labor and education to actively promote awareness of, and the benefits and successes of career opportunities in Registered Apprenticeable Occupations.

Ad Hoc Youth Council: The Youth Council is an ad hoc council of the State Board, comprised of members who have been identified as experts in youth programs and services. The Montana Youth Council will develop and maintain a collaborative and comprehensive approach for the delivery of youth services and workforce development issues for youth. They will encourage coordination in policy and program development among agencies and eligible WIA youth service providers for the most effective service delivery of youth programs possible.

Health Care Task Force: The HCTF was established in June, 2006 after data was presented and reviewed by the State Board indicating Montana is experiencing health care workforce shortages. The HCTF was charged to: 1) Identify health care workforce shortages and the regions in which they exist; 2) Identify any causes of the shortages; 3) Offer suggestions and recommendations that address the shortages. A report was presented to the SWIB's Executive Committee in December 2006 and submitted to the Governor for his consideration. The HCTF remains as an advisory body as the State Board begins its strategic planning for the next program year.

WIRED Industry Work Group: As part of Montana Agro-Energy (WIRED) Implementation Plan, an Industry Work Group is being considered as a possible committee under the SWIB. By forming the working group in this manner it will allow for easy flow of information from the private sector to the State Board as well as the WIRED Executive Steering Committee (ESC). Four members of the SWIB sit on the ESC. Members of the Industry group will be selected by the ESC and will have experience in the bio-products industry or affiliate industries, such as transportation, construction, mining, finance, and forestry industries. The committee members do not have to sit on the SWIB, and be grant applicants or awardees. The Industry group will advise the ESC on the opportunities and challenges they see the bio-product industry facing and the role they see state government playing on those issues.

Other committees will be appointed depending on need, to address issues as they arise.

3. *Describe the process your State used to identify your State board members. How did you select board members, including business representatives, who have optimum policy-making authority and who represent diverse regions of the State as required under WIA? (20CFR 661.200).)*

Governor Schweitzer posted a Boards and Councils section on the State's home page, calling for Montanans who were interested, to apply to sit on his public Boards and Councils. The site contained an on-line application form, and also provided the opportunity to make nominations. Governor Schweitzer also sent a letter to each individual who was a member of the State Board when he took office, thanking them for their service and encouraging them to apply if they were interested in being reappointed to the State Board.

Nominations for business representatives are received from across the state, and the Governor's Office solicit labor nominations from state labor federations as required under WIA. Association members also apply for appointment to the board. The Governor's Office ensures the individual has optimum policy making authority and meets the required criteria of representation as prescribed in the law. The State Board works closely with the Governor's Appointment Secretary to fill vacancies as they occur. The Governor carefully selects appointees from a list of nominations and applicants, to ensure the membership represents Montana's diverse economy, geography, population, and the high growth, high demand industries.

Members of the State Board are appointed by the Governor in accordance with WIA Section 111(b). The members represent the many facets of workforce development including business, labor, public education, higher education, economic development, youth activities, state agency leaders, and employment and training, as well as the State Legislature. Two legislators are appointed by the presiding leadership of each chamber of the Montana Legislature.

4. *Describe how the board's membership enables you to achieve your vision described above. (§§111(a-c) and 112(b)(1).)*

State Board membership complies with the requirements of federal law, and is comprised of representatives from key workforce partners and stakeholders from both the public and private sectors in Montana. The business leadership on the State Board is integral to achieving a demand-driven workforce system that provides the strategic framework for workforce investment in our State, and to focusing on the Governor's priority for integrating services to be responsive in a demand-driven system.

Public sector members represent key stakeholders in the system, including mandatory and optional One-Stop partners and programs. They assist the State Board and the Governor in understanding the State and local administrative issues related to coordinating the diverse array of programs and services, and in serving a diverse population of citizens and industries. Members are selected based upon their individual leadership experience and abilities, and because they represent the broad geographic, economic, and political diversity of the State. Members are leaders in their communities, as well as in business and in government, and have vested themselves and their communities in preparing Montana's workforce to support economic development and improving the quality of life for all Montanans.

5. *Describe how the Board carries out its functions as required in sec. 111 (d) and 20 CFR 661.205. Include functions the Board has assumed that are in addition to those required. Identify any functions required in sec. 111 (d) the Board does not perform and explain why.*

The State Board is responsible for assisting the Governor in those functions described in WIA Section 111(d). These functions are carried out through the State Board's standing and special committees, which are chaired by State Board members. The committees and State Board publicly deliberate policy issues and direct staff work in order to effectively carry out the State Board's functions. Any products and policies developed by committees are presented to the full State Board for action. Once policies are adopted, the State Board works closely with the appropriate state agency or entity to implement policy and distribute products. The State Board maintains a website to publish products and to inform the public and stakeholders of policy recommendations or products that have been developed.

In addition to required functions, the State Board is committed to coordinating with Tribal Governments on workforce and economic development issues, and working to identify strategies and solutions to unique workforce issues facing Native Americans.

6. *How will the State board ensure that the public (including people with disabilities) has access to board meetings and information regarding State board activities, including membership and meeting minutes? (20 CFR 661.205)*

The State Board deliberates issues at open public meetings in conformance with Montana's open meeting laws and constitution, and the WIA Sunshine Provision. The State Board utilizes its website to provide board members and the public with direct access to information on a variety of workforce investment issues, including meeting agendas, board member lists, products and policies, draft documents for public review and comment, and workforce resources. A notification is sent electronically to list-serve subscribers and board members advising of upcoming meetings and meeting materials once they are posted on the website. Meeting minutes are posted on the website once approved by the appropriate sub-committee or the State Board. On all documents relative to board meetings, notice is given asking that individuals requiring auxiliary aids, or special services and accommodations, contact State Board staff. Meeting facilities are selected to allow for wheel chair access. Official minutes are offered in alternative formats upon request.

In addition, the SWIB produces a newsletter every two months which is distributed electronically and posted to the website. The newsletter features sections such as: SWIB Director's Notes, Message from the Chair, Lead Articles, One-Stop Corner, Updates (i.e., WIRED, Committees, other significant projects and activities), pertinent statistical data, and introductions of new SWIB members.

7. *Identify the circumstances which constitute a conflict of interest for any State or local workforce investment board member or the entity that s/he represents, and any matter that would provide a financial benefit to that member or his or her immediate family. (§§111(f), 112(b)(13), and 117(g).)*

Members of the State Board are subject to the provisions of WIA Section 111 governing conflict of interest. In addition, the Board has adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy that is provided to board members, and is posted on the State Board website. A copy of the State Board's Policy is provided as Attachment E.

8. *What resources does the State provide the board to carry out its functions, i.e., staff, funding, etc.?*

Governor Schweitzer has committed a portion of the WIA Discretionary funds to be used to carry out State Board activities. These funds provide for state staff positions, and include operating expenses such as facilities, travel, and meeting preparation costs. The staff plans, develops, and implements State Board and committee meetings, carries out assignments from the State Board or committees, and implements action items upon request following each meeting. Staff researches issues and provides background material required by board members or committees, and facilitates high-level policy discussion. The staff also maintains the State Board website, provides training, and other supportive services as required. The State Board Director holds a leadership role in the preparation and planning of board meetings, and also assists in advising special committee chairs and vice chairs.

C. Structure/Process for State agencies and State Board to collaborate and communicate with each other and with the local workforce investment system (112(b)(8)(A).)

1. *Describe the steps the State will take to improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities and other related activities and programs outlined in section 112(b)(8)(A), at both the State and local level (e.g., joint activities, memoranda of understanding, planned mergers, coordinated policies, etc.). How will the State Board and agencies eliminate any existing State-level barriers to coordination? (111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)*

The State Board, through its broad membership, encourages collaboration among both State and local public and private entities. This collaboration is further demonstrated through the State Board's committee structure. Members of the State Board's committees include representation from local areas, business leaders, mandatory and optional system members, and local and State partner entities and stakeholders that have a vested interest in workforce issues. Additionally, there is a strong link with 2-year education on the State Board and its committees.

Pursuant to the Governor's Vision, communication and cooperation among system partners is crucial for the effective delivery of services to participants in the workforce system. Therefore, the first strategy is to promote and increase the role of the State Workforce Investment Board and its committees in the development of partnerships. The State Board acts as the convener of parties, and work to provide innovative strategies for cooperation between business and industry, economic development, the public workforce system, and education partners, with the primary focus on targeted industries with high-growth, high-demand occupations. Additionally, the Governor and State Board continuously works to ensure that those industries are represented on the Board.

Second, members of the Governor's cabinet continue to endorse a State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, the Departments of Labor and Industry that include representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison, Commerce, Public Health and Human Services including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Public Instruction, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least once a month to identify and discuss issues of mutual interest, and improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services.

2. *Describe the lines of communication established by the Governor to ensure open and effective sharing of information among the State agencies responsible for implementing the vision for the workforce system and between the State agencies and the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB).*

Open lines of communication are established through the representation of cabinet-level agency directors on the State Board, including the Governor's Chief Economic Development Officer, the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry (DLI), Director of the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Director of 2-Year Education and Workforce Development, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Director of the Department of Commerce. The Department of Labor and Industry also has a WIA liaison that works closely with both the State Board and staff to ensure communication relative to workforce policy and oversight issues.

Additionally, members of the Governor's cabinet continue to endorse a State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, the Departments of Labor and Industry that include representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison, Commerce, Public Health and Human Services including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Public Instruction, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least once a month to identify and discuss issues of mutual interest, and improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services.

State agency representatives who serve on the State Board also participate on its committees to coordinate and improve communication with business representatives and program operators from across the State.

3. *Describe the lines of communication and mechanisms established by the Governor to ensure timely and effective sharing of information between the State agencies/State Board and local workforce investment areas and local Boards. Include types of regularly issued guidance and how Federal guidance is disseminated to local Boards and One-Stop Career Centers. (112(b)(1).)*

Policies adopted by the SWIB are deliberated upon in open public forums. Once the policies are recommended to and/or adopted by the Governor, they are distributed to an

extensive list of interested persons and stakeholders, including state and local partners and state board members. This is done through an email distribution list which is maintained by the state board staff. In addition, State Board policies and documents are posted on the State Board's website for public access.

4. *Describe any cross-cutting organizations or bodies at the State level designed to guide and inform an integrated vision for serving youth in the State within the context of workforce investment, social services, juvenile justice, and education. Describe the membership of such bodies and the functions and responsibilities in establishing priorities and services for youth. How is the State promoting a collaborative cross-agency approach for both policy development and service delivery at the local level for youth?*

In 2004, a team from Montana (will be referenced as the Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision or the Team in the youth portions of the State Plan) attended one of the federally-sponsored Regional Youth Forums where the federal partners presented their shared vision for youth. The Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision included individuals representing foster care, education, WIA Title IB youth programs, and juvenile justice from the State of Montana Departments of Labor and Industry, Office of Public Instruction, Department of Corrections, Board of Crime Control, Department of Public Health and Human Services and representatives from Montana's two local workforce area youth councils and their administrative entity. The Team identified opportunities for collaboration that included identifying potential partners in the state to connect with and the benefits of making those connections; and drafted a work plan that outlines how the team will develop a common vision for youth and the action steps needed.

The Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision has since added action steps to the original work plan, that include working toward sharing, and achieving the shared vision of creating a collaborative approach to prepare youth for success in a global, demand-driven economy through coordination among agencies with focuses on alternative education, demand-driven models and youth most in need. To date, several members of the Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision serve on the SWIB's Youth Council. The Team will continue to invite other youth organizations to participate and work together for better integration and coordination at the state and local levels. While the Team is still in the early stages of planning, the expected outcome is to actively engage the Governor in a shared vision and to make recommendations to the Governor that the team feels confident will ensure continued coordination around youth workforce issues. Additionally, the Team hopes to encourage conversation around a collaborative approach to addressing workforce development issues for youth most in need, such as out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm-worker youth, and other youth at risk. Collaboration could include policy development, common definitions, common forms, strategies for referrals and integrated service delivery where possible.

IV. Economic and Labor Market Analysis (112(b)(4).)

As a foundation for this strategic plan and to inform the strategic investments and strategies that flow from this plan, provide a detailed analysis of the State's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context. Elements of the analysis should include the following:

A. What is the current makeup of the State's economic base by industry?

According to the Bureau of Business and Economic Research, Montana's basic industries include Federal Government (civilian), Transportation, Selected Manufacturing, Nonresident travel, Agriculture and related industries, Wood and Paper, Mining, and the Military. Table one shows the percentage of total basic industry labor income accounted for by each industry.

Table 1

| Industry | Percent of total labor income |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Federal Government (civilian) | 22% |
| Selected Manufacturing | 16% |
| Mining | 12% |
| Agriculture and Related | 11% |
| Travel | 11% |
| Transportation | 10% |
| Military | 9% |
| Wood and Paper | 9% |

Source: Bureau of Business and Economic Research

Basic industries are important to the overall health of the state's economy because they sell a product or service that brings in money from outside the state. The Federal Government is considered a basic industry in Montana because it brings money into the state in the form of federal spending. According to the tax foundation, Montana receives \$1.58 in federal spending for every \$1.00 paid in federal taxes, the ninth highest ratio in the nation.

B. What industries and occupations are projected to grow and/or decline in the short term and over the next decade?

The Research and Analysis Bureau produces both short term (2 year) and long term (10 year) industry and occupational projections. Our most recent industry and occupational projections are from 2004-2014 and 2005-2007.. Table 2 shows the top 10 growing occupation in terms of both percent growth and total number of new jobs. Table 3 shows the top 10 declining occupations. Growth rates are over the entire projection period. Projected growth rates for all occupations are available on our website: www.ourfactsyourfuture.org.

Table 2: Growing Occupations

| Long Term-Highest % Growth | | Short Term-Highest % Growth | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|------|
| Occupation | Rate | Occupation | Rate |
| Social and Human Service Assistants | 64.1% | Rotary Drill Operators, Oil and Gas | 27.0 |

| | | | |
|--|-------------|---|-------------|
| Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software | 56.7% | Derrick Operators, Oil and Gas | 27.0% |
| Computer Software Engineers, Applications | 48.4% | Helpers--Extraction Workers | 21.6% |
| Physician Assistants | 47.5% | Roustabouts, Oil and Gas | 18.9% |
| Environmental Engineers | 46.4% | Sheet Metal Workers | 14.6% |
| Septic Tank Servicers and Sewer Pipe Cleaners | 45.6% | Helpers--Pipelayers, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters | 14.5% |
| Personal and Home Care Aides | 45.6% | Helpers--Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons, and Tile and Marble Setters | 13.2% |
| Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts | 44.6% | Insulation Workers | 13.0% |
| Respiratory Therapists | 44.4% | Helpers, Construction Trades, All Other | 12.9% |
| Self-Enrichment Education Teachers | 44.2% | Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers | 12.6% |
| Long Term-most new jobs | Jobs | Short Term-most new jobs | Jobs |
| Child Care Workers | 5,331 | Carpenters | 712 |
| Retail Salespersons | 3,494 | Retail Salespersons | 467 |
| Carpenters | 3,327 | General and Operations Managers | 431 |
| Managers of Retail Sales Workers | 2,640 | Waiters and Waitresses | 375 |
| Registered Nurses | 2,493 | Construction Laborers | 354 |
| Cashiers | 2,160 | Farmers and Ranchers | 305 |
| Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor Trailer | 2,105 | Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer | 279 |
| General and Operations Managers | 2,051 | Child Care Workers | 273 |
| Landscaping and Grounds Keeping Workers | 2,006 | Registered Nurses | 269 |
| Janitors and Cleaners | 1,721 | Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food | 265 |

Table 3: Declining Occupations

| Long Term-Lowest % Growth | | Short Term-Lowest % Growth | |
|--|-------------|--|-------------|
| Occupation | Rate | Occupation | Rate |
| Word Processors and Typists | -21.5 | Farm and Home Management Advisors | -10.5% |
| Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs | -17.0 | Forensic Science Technicians | -8.3% |
| Computer Operators | -15.6 | Library, Museum, Training, and Other Education Workers, All Other (OES Only) | -7.7% |
| Furnace, Kiln, Oven, Drier, and Kettle Operators and Tenders | -15.2 | Agricultural and Food Science Technicians | -7.5% |

| | | | |
|---|-------------|---|-------------|
| Meter Readers, Utilities | -13.6 | Graduate Teaching Assistants | -6.9% |
| Grinding, Lapping, Polishing, and Buffing Machine Tool Setters | -12.8 | Engineering Teachers, Postsecondary | -6.8% |
| Order Clerks | -12.8 | Education Administrators, Postsecondary | -6.7% |
| Millwrights | -12.7 | Postsecondary Teachers, All Other | -6.1% |
| Prepress Technicians and Workers | -10.4 | Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers | -5.6% |
| Bindery Workers | -10.1 | Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary | -5.4% |
| Long Term-Least new jobs | Jobs | Short Term-Least new jobs | Jobs |
| Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive | -198 | Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive | -108 |
| Stock Clerks and Order Fillers | -134 | Graduate Teaching Assistants | -86 |
| Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand | -123 | Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education | -57 |
| Computer Operators | -73 | Library, Museum, Training, and Other Education Workers, All Other (OES Only) | -56 |
| Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood | -67 | Postsecondary Teachers, All Other | -54 |
| Order Clerks | -60 | Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria | -53 |
| Word Processors and Typists | -56 | Stock Clerks and Order Fillers | -33 |
| Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational Education | -55 | Education Administrators, Postsecondary | -29 |
| Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs | -52 | Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational Education | -29 |
| Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except | -47 | Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers | -26 |

Turning to industries. Tables 4 and 5 list the top 3 projected fastest growing and fastest declining industries in the State in terms of both percentage increase and number of jobs. Once again, complete industry projections can be found at www.ourfactsyourfuture.org.

Table 4

| Long-Term Projections 2004-2014 | | | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Industries with largest numeric increase | | | | |
| Industry | 2004 Employment | 2014 Employment | Numeric Change | Percent Change |
| Administrative and Support Services | 14,841 | 20,863 | 6,022 | 40.6 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 16,720 | 21,481 | 4,761 | 28.5 |
| Hospitals | 20,260 | 24,836 | 4,576 | 22.6 |

| Industries with largest percentage increase | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Educational Support Services | 271 | 641 | 370 | 136.5 |
| Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing | 515 | 808 | 293 | 56.9 |
| Machinery Manufacturing | 1,167 | 1,814 | 647 | 55.4 |
| Industries with largest numeric decrease | | | | |
| Wood Product Manufacturing | 4,709 | 3,949 | -760 | -16.1 |
| Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers | 1,205 | 536 | -669 | -55.5 |
| State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals | 9,170 | 8,692 | -478 | -5.2 |
| Industries with largest percentage decrease | | | | |
| Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers | 1,205 | 536 | -669 | -55.5 |
| Warehousing and Storage | 126 | 65 | -61 | -48.4 |
| Primary Metal Manufacturing | 308 | 164 | -144 | -46.8 |

Table 5

| Short-Term Projections 2005-2007 | | | | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Industries with largest numeric increase | | | | |
| Industry | 2005 Employment | 2007 Employment | Numeric Change | Percent Change |
| Specialty Trade Contractors | 12,602 | 14,706 | 2,104 | 16.7% |
| Food Services and Drinking Places | 33,536 | 35,144 | 1,608 | 4.8% |
| Construction of Buildings | 7,457 | 8,482 | 1,025 | 13.8% |
| Industries with largest percentage increase | | | | |
| Educational Support Activities | 307 | 456 | 149 | 48.5% |
| Support Activities for Mining | 1,988 | 2,590 | 602 | 30.3% |
| Primary Metal Manufacturing | 335 | 423 | 88 | 26.4% |
| Industries with largest numeric decrease | | | | |
| Elementary and Secondary Schools | 30,308 | 30,123 | -185 | -0.6% |
| Wood Product Manufacturing | 4,714 | 4,602 | -112 | -2.4% |
| Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers | 1,190 | 1,099 | -91 | -7.6% |
| Industries with largest percentage decrease | | | | |
| Computer and Electronic Products | 645 | 587 | -58 | -9.1% |
| Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers | 1,190 | 1,099 | -91 | -7.6% |
| Air Transportation | 780 | 733 | -47 | -6.1% |

C. *In what industries and occupations is there a demand for skilled workers and available jobs, both today and projected over the next decade? In what numbers?*

We do not have a good way to measure current job openings. One proxy for current demand is wage growth. One would assume that if there is a shortage of workers in a particular occupation, then wages in that occupation would rise. The following table lists the occupations that have experienced the sharpest wage growth over the past year, together with their entry-level educational requirements as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 6

| Occupation | Mean Wages | %change | Education Level |
|--|------------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Media and communication equipment workers, all other | 58,150 | 154.5 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Door-to-door sales workers, news and street vendors, and related workers | 24,010 | 81.1 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Tool and die makers | 40,950 | 77.7 | Long-term on-the-job training |
| Dentists, general | 68,970 | 61.1 | First professional degree |
| Environmental engineering technicians | 41,690 | 43.5 | Associate Degree |
| Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders | 31,770 | 42.1 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Optometrists | 85,530 | 41.9 | First Professional Degree |
| Financial examiners | 43,640 | 33.7 | Bachelor's Degree |
| Sales and related workers, all other | 31,810 | 33.7 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Painting, coating, and decorating workers | 26,550 | 28.0 | Short-term on-the-job training |

As can be seen in the table, four of the ten occupations with the fastest wage increases between 2004 and 2005 require some training beyond high school, while the other six only require medium-term on the job training.

The next table lists jobs that are projected to experience strong job growth between 2004 and 2014 and also have higher wages than the state average. Half of these occupations require some sort of formal post-secondary education.

Table 7

| Occupation | Total job growth | Education Level |
|--|------------------|---|
| Carpenters | 3,327 | Long-term on-the-job training |
| Managers of Retail Sales Workers | 2,640 | Work experience in a related occupation |
| Registered Nurses | 2,493 | Associate degree |
| Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor Trailer | 2,105 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| General and Operations Managers | 2,051 | Bachelor's degree or higher, plus work experience |
| Lawyers | 1,234 | First professional degree |
| Managers, All Other | 1,099 | Work experience in a related occupation |
| Accountants and Auditors | 970 | Bachelor's degree |
| Real Estate Sales Agents | 969 | Postsecondary vocational training |
| Managers of construction trades and extraction workers | 938 | Work experience in a related occupation |

D. What jobs/occupations are most critical to the State's economy?

The labor market is changing; a high school degree is no longer enough. Montana continues to increase educational attainment of kids who would otherwise stop at a high school degree. The Governor wants to hold the line on tuition for Montana's university system in the 2007 session and provide more scholarships to students. With zero percent increase in tuition and a greater investment in scholarships, there will be more opportunity to attend college in Montana and drive our state's future economic growth.

The jobs and occupations most critical to the State's economy are those in the high-growth, high-demand industries. The State and State Board are committed to partnering with the Research and Analysis Bureau to continually work to predict those jobs in Montana that are both high-growth and high-demand, and whenever possible, high-wage. Once identified, the State and the State Board will work with the State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development and through other established partnerships and collaborative strategies, to coordinate education efforts to address the skills needs within those occupations.

There are several industries critical to Montana's economy, including energy development and generation. While expanding the opportunities in the "new economy", Montana's Governor is committed to building upon the State's resource based economic structure to promote a Value-Added Economy. In the energy field, Montana's Governor will commit significant efforts toward renewable and agricultural-based energy development. Emphasis on renewable energy projects and the associated infrastructure requirements will increase the demand for the high value jobs associated with those industries. During the past two years Montana has completed and announced an array of energy programs and was awarded a Generation I WIRED grant. The identified WIRED region, encompassing 32 counties and six Indian Reservations, has historically relied heavily on agriculture as an economic force. Through committed partnerships the region will develop new directions for the future of rural Montana, and transform the rural Ag-economy including but not limited to: 1) systems level curriculum roadmap with supporting course materials using the cluster as context; 2) delivery models that provide blended e-learning and instructor delivery; 3) Manufacturing Career Cluster model that provides students and incumbent workers the educational information to create career pathway; 4) models for increasing collaboration with industry partners to develop competency-based modular training programs; 5) optimization of bio-lubricant production in existing industry; 6) expansion of existing establishment of oilseed processing and refining facilities; and 7) evaluation of new oil crops suitable for production in the arid climate of central and eastern Montana. With advances in bio-fuels and renewables, the region is well positioned to revitalize the economy with energy development.

Health care is another industry cluster receiving much attention. The Administration is targeting resources to reduce the health care worker shortage by providing funds to 2-year colleges for equipment, programs and need-based aid. The State Boards Health Care Task Force provides guidance to the Governor and the State Board. The Health Care Workforce Advisory Council provides guidance to the Board of Regents Workforce Development Committee. Recommendations are made on the most cost effective options to train, recruit, and retain health care workers.

E. What are the skill needs for the available, critical, and projected jobs?

In March 2005 Rob Marvin published an article in the *Economy at a Glance* that addressed the skills most in demand for high wage/high growth jobs. These jobs were defined as those with wages above 35,000 and job growth from 2000-2003 of at least 20%. We replicated this research using more recent data (2002-2005). Skills associated with particular jobs are obtained from the O*Net program. <http://online.onetcenter.org> The four skills listed as most important by the most high wage/high growth jobs were **Active Listening, Reading Comprehension, Mathematics, and Equipment Maintenance**.

F. What is the current and projected demographics of the available labor pool (including the incumbent workforce) both now and over the next decade?

Currently, Montana's population ranks fourth oldest in the nation, with a median age of 40.2. We have a disproportionate number of "baby boomers" in the state. According to Census estimates for July of 2005, 28.7% of Montana's population was between the ages of 45 and 64. This is the third highest percentage for this age group in the nation. This implies that the state will face challenges replacing the baby boomers when they begin to retire, perhaps more so than other states. Another interesting statistic is the dependency ratio, which is the percentage of the population age that are dependents (0 to 17 and 65+) divided by the working age population (18-64). In 2005, Montana's dependency ratio was 55.4%.

Current research shows that with the increasing age of Montana's population, many people want and/or need to work past normal retirement age. This pool of people will become increasingly important in meeting labor requirements. The US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration published the Protocol for Serving Older Workers, which identifies proposed actions steps for State Workforce Investment Boards, Local Workforce Investment Boards, and One Stops. Montana and the State Board will work to develop strategies for implementing the proposed action steps as identified by the USDOL publication for the State Board, One-Stops, Intermediaries and service providers, and business and industry.

G. Is the State experiencing any "in migration" or "out migration" of workers that impact the labor pool?

Timely in migration and out migration data by occupation is very hard to come by. In terms of total migration, the Census Bureau estimates that Montana had a net in-migration of 6,600 people between July 2005 and July 2006. It is impossible to tell what proportion of the migrants are working age. In a separate study, the Census Bureau estimated that between 1995 and 2000 the State experienced a net out migration (-2,750) of young (25 to 39) single and college-educated residents. This particular demographic is important to the overall health of an economy because it is highly skilled, mobile, and will affect the labor market for many years to come.

Economic issues associated with Montana's aging population is resulting in concerted efforts by the State Board to discuss the dynamics of attracting and retaining mature workers as well as the Next Generation workforce. The State Board will address talent development of both the Mature Worker and the Next Generation workforce. The Board will work to initiate strategies that consider their respective unique workplace values and needs. The Board will work to provide community planning ideas that will assist in the attraction and retention of needed workers.

H. *Based on an analysis of both the projected demand for skills and the available and projected labor pool, what skill gaps is the State experiencing today and what skill gaps are projected over the next decade?*

The projections consortium has recently developed a web-based tool to analyze what knowledge, skills, and work activities will be in demand based on the occupational growth projected for the state. The table below lists the top twenty knowledge, skill, and work activity competencies that are projected to be important in the jobs created between 2002 and 2012. Unfortunately, due to funding constraints we were unable to update these numbers using 2004 to 2014 projections. The numbers in the second column refer to the number of jobs for which the given skill will be important.

Table 8

| | | |
|--|-------|----|
| Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships | 11250 | wa |
| Reading Comprehension | 8870 | s |
| Customer and Personal Service | 8540 | k |
| Active Listening | 8380 | s |
| Speaking | 7590 | s |
| Writing | 6820 | s |
| Critical Thinking | 6710 | s |
| Organizing, planning and prioritizing work. | 6680 | wa |
| Getting information needed to do the job | 6460 | wa |
| Communicating with supervisors, peers or subordinates | 6200 | wa |
| Active Learning | 6020 | s |
| Handling and moving objects | 5990 | wa |
| Coordination | 5810 | s |
| Working directly with the public | 5780 | wa |
| Social Perceptiveness | 5670 | s |
| Updating and using job-relevant knowledge | 5620 | wa |
| Monitoring | 5520 | s |
| Performing general physical activities | 5190 | wa |
| Instructing | 5110 | s |
| Time Mgmt | 4940 | s |

Note: wa=work activity, s=skill, k=knowledge.

The web-based tool also can identify areas of potential future shortfall by comparing the skill mix in the current workforce and the projected needs of the future (2012) workforce. Using this method, the following were identified as areas of potential future shortfalls in Montana.

Table 9

| | | |
|--|----------|----|
| Reading Comprehension | 100 | s |
| Customer and Personal Service | 100 | k |
| Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships | 100 | wa |
| Getting information needed to do the job | 97.56098 | wa |
| Active Listening | 97.14286 | s |
| English Language | 96.9697 | k |
| Organizing, planning and prioritizing work. | 95.12195 | wa |
| Speaking | 94.28571 | s |
| Sales and Marketing | 93.93939 | k |
| Communicating with supervisors, peers or subordinates | 92.68293 | wa |

As can be seen, some skills that are currently in high demand are also projected to grow rapidly, leading to a potential skills gap even though there is a strong supply of these skills in the current workforce.

- I. Based on the analysis of the economy and the labor market, what workforce development issues has the state identified.*
- J. What workforce development issues has the State prioritized as being most critical to its economic health and growth?*

Montana continues to grow fastest in jobs requiring lower skill levels that have correspondingly low wages. To complicate this problem, Montana workers are well educated but often lack the specific skills needed by business and industry. Existing coursework in two-year education facilities does not always emphasize industry specific knowledge to meet industry standards. To meet the needs of emerging and/or expanding businesses, the workforce needs to develop the technical skills relating to those businesses. Because of the size of the state and communities sometimes separated by hundreds of miles, coupled with the fact that even communities close in proximity can have very different economic bases, aligning education programs to meet varying employer needs is a challenge. To compound the worker shortage problem, Montana expects to net 93,000 additional jobs between 2000 and 2010. These jobs are both a result of new growth and replacement workers, particularly as baby boomers retire.

Wages are low; Montana is ranked eleventh in the country for multiple jobholders and 49th in average annual pay. With low wages and an educated population, many Montanans are leaving the state to take higher paying jobs, which compounds the problem of worker shortages.

Montana workforce development efforts are comprised of more than 30 separate and distinct programs, funded by a variety of federal and state sources and are not organized or coordinated as a system to support state and local economic development efforts. Montana's education systems are beginning to actively respond to the educational aspects of building a workforce that supports growing and expanding industries in Montana.

Like many other States, Montana faces worker shortages in various occupations - primarily in health care. The SWIB's Health Care Task Force found that shortages in this field pose serious problems especially in a frontier state like Montana with a growing population of elderly citizens. Of Montana's 56 counties, 50 have been designated in whole or in part as Health Professional Shortage Areas by the federal government. The State Board will continue its efforts to support the Governor and his commitments to improve and make more-accessible health care services, training and education opportunities, and addressing retention and recruitment issues facing the state.

In addition to health care the Governor of Montana has a strong energy policy. During the past two years Montana has completed and announced an array of energy programs and was awarded a Generation I WIRED grant. The identified WIRED region, encompassing 32 counties and six Indian Reservations, has historically relied heavily on agriculture as an economic force. Through committed partnerships the region will develop new directions for the future of rural Montana, and transform the rural Ag-economy including but not limited to: 1) systems level curriculum roadmap with supporting course materials using the cluster as context; 2) delivery models that provide blended e-learning and instructor delivery; 3) Manufacturing Career Cluster model that provides students and incumbent workers the educational information to create career pathway; 4) models for increasing collaboration

with industry partners to develop competency-based modular training programs; 5) optimization of bio-lubricant production in existing industry; 6) expansion of existing establishment of oilseed processing and refining facilities; and 7) evaluation of new oil crops suitable for production in the arid climate of central and eastern Montana. With advances in bio-fuels and renewables, the region is well positioned to revitalize the economy with energy development.

V. Overarching State Strategies

- A. *Identify how the State will use WIA Title I funds to leverage other Federal, State, local, and private resources in order to maximize the effectiveness of such resources and to expand the participation of business, employees, and individuals in the Statewide workforce investment system?*

One of the Governor's priorities for moving Montana's workforce system into the demand-driven model is to more efficiently use public and private funding. The Governor has charged the State Board with pursuing strategies to leverage funding at the State level and to guide and encourage more effective and efficient partnerships and leveraging at the local level.

In program year 2005 Montana's Governor allocated discretionary dollars to the Department of Commerce to invest in and promote incumbent worker training. The dollars have been awarded to businesses in several communities to assist with the training of 263 employees to increase knowledge, skills and competencies in order to meet the changing demands in high-tech occupations. In all cases, the businesses have, at a minimum, matched the incumbent worker training dollars they received, thereby leveraging additional training and funding to expand their programs and ensure their sustainability. Governor Schweitzer has designated the Montana Department of Commerce as the point of contact for economic development efforts in Montana, and will likely continue supporting the Department's excellent workforce and economic development efforts.

The State Board will continue working with the State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development, and through their committees to pursue strategies to leverage additional resources, and expand the participation of business and employees in the system.

- B. *What strategies are in place to address the national strategic direction, the Governor's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the State's economy and labor market?*

The State Board is looking forward to the opportunity to become the catalyst for developing a new workforce system vision and strategies that follow the general direction and leadership the Governor has provided. The eight national priorities are also viewed by both the Governor and the State Board as critical directions for improving and advancing Montana's workforce system and became major considerations in planning discussion and development.

The State Board and the Governor are committed to considering and addressing workforce issues identified through the planning process, and will be looking at options available for the use of waivers to promote maximum flexibility in the development of the workforce and one-stop systems.

In addition, the State Workforce Investment Board fully supports the Apprenticeship and Training Program, and considers it vital for continued economic and workforce development in Montana. The Board is committed to working to expand and develop this program, and will use the Apprenticeship and Training Program and the State Boards Apprenticeship Advisory Council as a strategy to address the needs of business in preparing workers for jobs in high-growth, high-demand occupations. Montana's Governor will continue to support legislation to expand apprenticeship programs.

- C. *Based on the State's economic and labor market analysis, what strategies has the State implemented or plans to implement to identify and target industries and occupations within the State that are high growth, high demand, and vital to the State's economy? The State may want to consider:*
1. *Industries projected to add a substantial number of new jobs to the economy*
 2. *Industries that have a significant impact on the overall economy*
 3. *Industries that impact the growth of other industries*
 4. *Industries that are being transformed by technology and innovation that require new skill sets for workers*
 5. *Industries that are new and emerging and are expected to grow.*

The state's Workforce Information Core Products and Services grant, includes funding for the Research & Analysis Bureau to accomplish both short- and long-term employment projections by industry and occupation.

These projections will be based on both a trend analysis and long-term economic projections. Economic projections will be developed/researched using collaborative efforts between other entities to include US Census Bureau, statewide economic research entities, and state and local economic development organizations.

Analysis of these projections has, and will continue to identify, industries included in items 1-3 above. Additionally, the evolving use of skills-based analysis will allow the further improvement of skills-based projections.

At a minimum, the State Board will review these projections as presented by the Research and Analysis Bureau, annually. Additionally, the bureau will work with state and local officials, trade groups, economic developers, or other labor market information users to identify specific industries for in-depth analysis and projections.

Montana's Governor is committed to expanding upon the State's resource based economic structure, including energy, wood products, and agriculture, to promote a Value-Added Economy. This will increase the demand for jobs within those industries and is expected to add a substantial number of new jobs to the economy. In addition, alternative energy is a new and emerging industry in Montana, and the Governor is pursuing strategies to promote and expand its development within the State.

Montana is one of 13 regions across the country to successfully compete for the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (Generation I WIRED) grant. Montana's proposal focuses on 32 rural counties in the eastern part of the state, and will provide training to

build a bio-product workforce, especially in occupations related to bio lubricants and bio fuels. Partners within the Governor's office, Department of Commerce, DLI, the university system, the State Board and others are collaborating to ensure a successful WIRED project in Montana, which creates jobs in high growth, high wage energy industry, and improve the economic outlook for the most rural parts of the state including 6 of Montana's 7 Reservations.

- D. What strategies are in place to promote and develop ongoing and sustained strategic partnerships that include business and industry, economic development, the public workforce system, and education partners (K-12, community colleges, others) for the purpose of continuously identifying workforce challenges and developing solutions to targeted industries' workforce challenges?*

The Governor is pursuing three strategies to promote and develop strategic partnerships. The first is to promote and increase the role of the State Workforce Investment Board and its committees in the development of partnerships. The State Board will act as the convener of parties, and work to provide innovative strategies for cooperation between business and industry, economic development, the public workforce system, and education partners, with the primary focus on targeted industries with high-growth, high-demand occupations. Additionally, the Governor and State Board will continuously work to ensure that those industries are represented on the Board.

Second, members of the Governor's cabinet continue to endorse a State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, the Departments of Labor and Industry that include representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison, Commerce, Public Health and Human Services including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Public Instruction, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least once a month to identify and discuss issues of mutual interest, and improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services.

Third, Montana was one of six states that participated in the National Governor's Association (NGA) State Policy Academy on Creating the Next Generation of Workforce Development Policy. The Academy was a highly interactive team-based process for crafting policy strategies and solutions to complex policy challenges. The NGA Academy Team was comprised of high-level representatives of workforce development, education, business, and economic development organizations. The final report from the Academy was submitted to Montana's Governor in October 2004 citing several recommendations. The Montana Team intends to continue their work beyond the sponsorship of the NGA Academy project to assist with the implementation of their recommendations, and to enhance opportunities for successful workforce development strategies.

Montana has a successful history of being selected to participate on National Academy Teams to represent a rural perspective. The State will work to ensure continued successful participation on these projects to promote continuous improvement in Montana's workforce development efforts.

- E. What State strategies are in place to ensure that sufficient system resources are being spent to support training of individuals in high growth/high demand industries?*

The Governor and the State Board are committed to supporting training in high growth/high demand industries. To ensure that sufficient system resources are being spent to support this

commitment, Montana's State Board will work closely with the Research and Analysis Bureau and use labor market information and economic indicators to identify the high growth/high demand industries and occupations. For example, Montana's growth in the construction industry outpaced the state's total employment growth by a wide margin. In 2005, the construction industry accounted for 28% of the job growth in Montana and about 17% of the state's wage growth. To meet the demands, Montana State University (MSU) Billings and the College of Technology (COT) are leading a statewide workforce training initiative that is being supported by federal funds. By creating the Montana Building Industry Labor Training (BILT) project, leaders from across the state are implementing the \$1.98 million US Department of Labor Community-Based Job Training Grant to increase workforce training opportunities in several construction technologies. The four campus grant partners are: MSU-Billings College of Technology; the University of Montana (UM) College of Technology in Missoula; the UM-Tech College of Technology in Butte; and MSU-Northern in Havre. The program recently expanded to include programs at Miles City Community College, Flathead Community College, the UM College of Technology in Helena and the MSU Great Falls College of Technology.

MSU Billings College of Technology received an additional Community-Based Job Training Grant "Energy for Tomorrow" to build Montana's energy workforce through the creation of an Energy Workforce Training and Development Center. The funds received will allow MSU Billings College of Technology and its business and community partners to develop and offer educational programs and workforce training opportunities. The goal of the grant is to expand the availability of qualified workers to staff the growing energy sector in Montana, and to support the educational needs of the State of Montana WIRED (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) initiative to advance the development of biofuels, natural, and renewable resources.

Another example is the recent bill submitted by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) to the Montana State Legislature that would appropriate general fund monies for equipment and technology in Equipment and Technology, and appropriate funds for high-demand programs in Workforce Training--Program Development. OCHE would administer the funds in consultation with the State Board.

The State Board, in its advisory capacity to the Governor, will communicate information and recommendations on how to best utilize system resources to sufficiently support training in high growth/high demand industries.

In addition, Montana will strive to continue implementing the recommendations of the National Governor's Association State Policy Academy on Creating the Next Generation of Workforce Development Policy. The NGA Academy Team submitted a report to Montana's Governor in October 2004 outlining the following recommendations, which the State Board will work to implement in cooperation with the State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development:

- The Governor make workforce development a priority with visible committed leadership in all departments.
- The Governor provide directions to licensing boards that all members appointed will have a commitment to considering apprenticeship and other viable non traditional training options to address areas of workforce shortage.
- The Governor request a joint plan from the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Department of Labor and Industry, the Office of Public Instruction and the State

- Workforce Investment Board that identifies strategies to: 1) share and measure workforce data; 2) improve education and training in rural areas; and, 3) meet the workforce needs of business.
- The Governor request legislative funding to support a shared/combined data collection system for workforce development.

Another identified strategy will be to work with numerous entities such as: Board of Regents, Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship and Training Program, and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, to expedite course and curriculum development processes to address business and industry needs for training workers in high-growth, high-demand occupations. Montana will work to establish quicker course and curriculum development and approval through the Colleges of Technology and two-year colleges, to address business needs for training workers in high-growth, high-demand occupations.

In addition, and as a result of the new statewide planning structure, Montana has seen a reduction of administrative overhead costs in the local areas from 20% to 4% after the transition year, a reduction of approximately \$1.2 million from what was spent to support the previous structure. This efficiency maximizes the available money directed to training and services to business and job seekers in the face of the severe federal budget cuts experienced by the state in the last several years.

F. What workforce strategies does the State have to support the creation, sustainability, and growth of small businesses and support for the workforce needs of small businesses as part of the State's economic strategy?

The Governor and the State Board are committed to the success of Montana's small businesses (classified as those with fewer than 500 employees), which make up approximately 97.8% of business in the state. Since small businesses drive the majority of growth and innovation in Montana, important strategies for stimulating economic growth include supporting small business by continuously providing employers with a skilled workforce, and creating every opportunity for small businesses to expand and create more jobs.

The State Board will continue to work closely with economic development agencies, associations, and partners, to build on a "Regional Business One-Stop" model for co-location of business services to best meet the needs of business clients in a demand-driven system. The Flathead Regional Business Center in Kalispell will serve as a model of success for this strategy, and the State Board will work through its committees to endorse and promote additional Business Centers and the Business One-Stop system model throughout the state. The State Board and the Governor also encourage participation of Local and Regional economic development organizations in development of the Business One-Stop model.

It is the vision of the State, utilizing the Executive Pulse Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program, to build a dynamic business retention plan that is inclusive of economic, workforce, and community development. The BEAR program established a database for business trends in Montana. To pave the way for BEAR to be accessible across the state, the Governor's Office of Economic Development recently purchased access to the BEAR software for the entire state. The Montana Economic Development Association (MEDA) office is administering and coordinating the program for the Department of Commerce and the Governor's Office of

Economic Development. Montana has identified 12 Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs) for the purpose of regional economic growth and regional coordination. To date, the BEAR program has been implemented in communities within nine regions, and is in the discussion and planning phases in several communities throughout all regions.

- G. *How are the funds reserved for Statewide activities used to incent the entities that make up the State's workforce system at the State and local levels to achieve the Governor's vision and address the national strategic direction identified in Part I of the guidance?*

Since the implementation of the WIA, Montana has used the funds reserved for statewide activities in a variety of ways to provide incentives for system-building. The focus has been on the Governor's priorities and the overall goals and long-term objectives of the Workforce Investment Act State Vision to facilitate the growth of Montana companies, increase wages for trained workers, increase employee productivity, and to assist in the skill development of employees in Montana, focusing on developing skills in emerging Montana industries such as information and advanced technology, health services, value-added agriculture and communications.

Presently the Workforce Programs & Oversight Bureau uses state incentive monies to sponsor bi-annual WIA Technical Assistance Trainings, bring in key note speakers and is currently in the planning stages for a WIA Regional Youth Forum for the Summer of 2007.

Due to the new statewide planning structure in Montana, previous incentive policies are no longer a valid means of distributing incentive funds. The WIA Administrative Entity is working with the SWIB to implement new policies for allocating incentive funds to the two local areas.

- H. *Describe the State's strategies to promote collaboration between the public workforce system, education, human services, juvenile justice, and others to better serve youth that are most in need and have significant barriers to employment, and to successfully connect them to education and training opportunities that lead to successful employment?*

Collaboration is being promoted at the State level through the Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision and the SWIB Youth Council. The Team currently has youth leaders representing foster care, education, WIA Title IB youth programs, and juvenile justice from the State of Montana Departments of Labor and Industry, Office of Public Instruction, Department of Corrections, Board of Crime Control, Department of Public Health and Human Services and a representative from the State Board's Youth Council. As other agencies with youth interests are identified the Team will invite them to participate in the planning process.

In 2004, the State Workforce Investment Board produced the *Snapshot 2004* of Montana's Workforce Development System. Now produced annually, the *Snapshot 2006* document shows where Montanans can go to access workforce development programs, including youth services, education, and job training in general. The document also includes program descriptions and financial data (federal and/or state funding) for workforce development programs in State agencies. The Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision plans to use this document as one approach to identifying other programs with youth interests. Additionally, if dollars can be identified across statewide programs there is the potential of leveraging support and providing an opportunity to determine how services can be streamlined and made more efficient.

Collaboration has been occurring at the local level for a number of years. The Workforce Investment Act made it formal with the establishment of the one-stop workforce development system. Staff from the Job Corps, education, and human service agencies either hotel or a co-locate in One-Stop Centers. Youth services representation is evident at all One-Stop Centers. In May 2006, the Youth Council was formed. The Youth Council is an ad hoc council of the State Board comprised of members who have been identified as experts in youth programs and services. Representation includes Juvenile Justice, Job Corps, Education, Indian Affairs, Special Education, Youth Service Providers, US Probation, and the State Board.

- I. *Describe the State's strategies to identify State laws, regulations, policies that impede successful achievement of workforce development goals and strategies to change or modify them.*

All bills relating to workforce development are monitored by the State Department of Labor and Industry and Governor's Office. Commerce monitors economic development legislation, and the Commissioner of Higher Education and Office of Public Instruction monitor legislation that may impact education in Montana. The State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development serves as a forum for communication among agencies and department heads. This provides a means of ensuring that issues or concerns relating to legislation that may affect multiple agencies are brought to each department and can be shared with legal staff or legislative liaisons within state agencies. In addition, it allows agencies to work together to develop a common stance with regard to legislation, and collaborative testimony to support or oppose a bill.

The Governor is committed to simplifying regulations, particularly those that unnecessarily impede efforts to improve Montana's business climate and economy. The State Board, in collaboration with partner programs at the state level, local entities such as Job Service Employer Councils and local boards, will work to identify unnecessary regulations that burden the State's efforts to provide effective workforce programs and services.

- J. *Describe how the state will take advantage of the flexibility provisions in WIA for waivers and the option to obtain approval as a workflex State.*

Montana will research and use as much flexibility as possible through the use of waivers to address local workforce needs specific to a rural state and its rural communities. Montana's low population density, coupled with the nation's fourth largest geographic area, puts the State in a position to take advantage of the use of waivers to be innovative in our approach to meet these unique rural needs.

1. Statewide Regional Planning Area – State Workforce Investment Board

- a. Montana applied for and was awarded a Waiver in October 2005 to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a state board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area. **Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a state board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area.**

- b. In the 2-Year Plan Modification approved in October 2005, Montana also formally requested and was granted a waiver of the requirements relating to local area performance in WIA sec. 136(c). Montana, in functioning as a single statewide planning area, reports statewide data and meets applicable state performance requirements. This enables the SWIB to monitor progress throughout the state, take appropriate corrective action promptly, and will lead to improved statewide performance. **Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to report statewide data and meet applicable state performance requirements.**
2. In April 2005, the State was awarded an extension of the waiver for a **time limit on period of initial eligibility for training providers** at 20 CFR 663.530 thru June 30, 2007. **Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to apply 20 CFR 663.530.**
3. Montana applied for and was granted a waiver in December 2006, to apply 20 CFR Sections 667.130(b)(1), which permits: Transfer of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds into a statewide fifteen (15) percent set-aside annually. This waiver will permit the State to use a portion of local area formula funds for adults and dislocated workers to provide incumbent worker training identified at WIA Section 134(a)(3)(A)(iv), not to exceed \$400,000 for Program Year 2006. **Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to apply 20 CFR 667.130(b)(1), which permits the transfer of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds into a statewide fifteen (15) percent set-aside annually to provide for incumbent worker training.**
4. **Two additional waiver** requests have been publicly noticed for comment and will be submitted by March 31, 2007 to USDOL for approval. The additional waiver requests include:
 - a. **Statutory Regulations to be waived:**
Regulations at 20 CFR Part 666.100 (WIA Law Section 136(b)) which specifies the performance measures that must be included in state plans. This waiver is to allow Montana to stop reporting on the current 17 performance measures (15 core and 2 customer satisfaction) and to implement the nine common measures for WIA Title IB adult, youth and dislocated worker delineated in TEGL 17-05. MDLI will continue to track customer satisfaction.
 - b. **Statutory Regulations to be waived:**
WIA Regulations at Section 663.530-540 (WIA Section 122(c)(5)), specifies the time limits for initial eligibility and/or subsequent eligibility. This waiver request will:
 1. Permanently waive performance in subsequent eligibility determination process for eligible training providers to begin in PY2007; and
 2. Waive the eligibility determination process for a State University, Community or Tribal College, or Center of Applied Technology who is adding new programs to their training curriculum.

If approved, Montana requests these waivers be incorporated into this plan.

No state or local policies limit the Governor's authority to request these waivers or extensions to existing waivers.

VI. Major State Policies and Requirements

Describe major State policies and requirements that have been established to direct and support the development of a Statewide workforce investment system not described elsewhere in this Plan as outlined below.

- A. *What State policies and systems are in place to support common data collection and reporting processes, information management, integrated service delivery, and performance management?*

The Montana Information Technology Act of 2001 (Title 2, Chapter 17, Part 5, Section 505) states that (1) it is the policy of the state that information technology be used to improve the quality of life of Montana citizens by providing educational opportunities, creating quality jobs and a favorable business climate, improving government, and protecting individual privacy and the privacy of the information contained within information technology systems, and that (2) it is the policy of the state that the development of information technology resources in the state must be conducted in an organized, deliberative, and cost-effective manner.

These policies guide Montana in efforts to support common data collection and reporting processes, information management, integrated service delivery, and performance management. The State uses MontanaWorks (previously known as the Montana Management Information System – MTMIS) to track all of the WIA, Wagner Peyser, Trade Act programs, and National Emergency Grants activities.

- B. *What State policies are in place that promote efficient use of administrative resources such as requiring more co-location and fewer affiliate sites in local One-Stop systems to eliminate duplicative facility and operational costs or to require a single administrative structure at the local level to support local boards and to be the fiscal agent for WIA funds to avoid duplicative administrative costs that could otherwise be used for service delivery and training?*

The Montana Department of Labor & Industry is designated as the single administrative entity, grant recipient and fiscal agent for WIA. The State Board assumed the role and responsibilities of two local boards, and the State maintains the statewide management information and financial system for WIA to eliminate duplicative administrative costs in Montana and promote efficient use of administrative resources within the workforce system.

The One-Stop system has been enhanced by: expanding the number of One-Stop Centers, greatly increasing workforce system reach to citizens and business customers; and by increasing sites where co-location and integration are feasible. Additional policies will be considered as the State Workforce Investment Board analyzes its inventory of workforce services.

- C. *What State policies are in place to promote universal access and consistency of services statewide?*

Montana's one-stop workforce system provides services directly to customers either onsite, through electronic access, or referral by Montana's one-stop centers or associate sites to other agencies that include:

Job Corps
Carl Perkins Act Post-Secondary programs
Vocational Rehabilitation
Office of Public Assistance
Adult Education and Literacy programs
Montana University System
National Farmworker Jobs Program
Wagner-Peyser Programs

Montana One-Stops and WIA service providers located throughout the State are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Montanans can select the location and method of access that is most convenient to them. This system is designed to address the rural nature of the state and the diverse needs of customers, job seekers, and employers. Universal access is achieved by the availability of onsite and remote services and flexible hours, such as after hours and weekends in some areas, access to those with limited English speaking proficiency, and technological accessibility.

All individuals will have access to the one-stop system and to core employment related services. Information about job vacancies, career options, student financial aid, relevant employment trends, and instruction on how to conduct a job search, write a resume, or interview with an employer is available to any job seeker or individual wanting to advance his or her current career. Any individual, whether they are an employer, job seeker, program participant or service provider, can have access to information on services and programs from any Internet connected computer.

Job Service Workforce Centers have assigned an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinator in each center across the State. An ADA coordinator is also in each of Montana's One-Stop Centers. The ADA coordinator is responsible for the promotion and development of employment opportunities, job counseling, and referral to other workforce partners for specific services and job placement.

Vocational Rehabilitation is a major partner in Montana's one-stop system and is represented on each Community Management Team and the State Board. In addition, a State Board member serves on the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council. Vocational Rehabilitation provides training to their partners on their services in addition to actively sharing their expertise.

Universal access is also assured through outreach activities necessitated by the rural nature of Montana and the distance between communities that are required may be a weekly visit to outlying communities or out stationing employees in rural areas. Outreach services may be provided at public libraries, schools or other accessible sites a community has to offer.

D. What policies support a demand-driven approach to workforce development – such as training on the economy and labor market data for local board and one-stop career center staff?

The State Board supports a demand-driven approach to workforce development, to include training on labor market information for workforce development agencies and one-stop career center staff. The SWIB also directs the administrative entity to promote and use LMI data when providing technical assistance to WIA service providers at semi-annual Technical Assistance & Training sessions. The State Board provided input on and approved the Department's Research &

Analysis Bureau's grant plan for the Employment and Training Administration's Core Products and Services grant.

The products and services of the Research & Analysis Bureau are being reviewed annually and based on the feedback gained from customers each product/service is improved to meet customer needs. The economists make many presentations on the economy and labor market information to diverse groups across the state.

Bureau staff have increased the number of partnerships with other agencies and members of the workforce development system which has resulted in providing in depth research on specific topics for these partner agencies.

Improvements to the Research & Analysis website were made and will continue to be made based on customer feedback. The end goal of these efforts is to place relevant, localized, and timely data at the fingertips of decision-makers and other users of workforce information. Timely, relevant, and localized data is a critical piece of a demand-driven approach.

The Research & Analysis Bureau also make use of a customer service database which is used to log and track customer requests. Compilation and analysis of this data has been and will be used to identify high-demand information and the customer base for that information, and allow the Bureau to respond accordingly.

E. What policies are in place to ensure that the resources available through the federal and/or state apprenticeship programs and the Job Corps are fully integrated with the State's One-Stop delivery system?

The State ensures that the integration of resources available through apprenticeship programs and the Job Corps are integrated into the local One-Stop systems by actively coordinating with those programs through representation on the State Board. Job Corps representatives have staff members co-located within Job Service Workforce and One-Stop Centers in Montana. Labor Organizations, businesses that are apprenticeship sponsors, and private industry associations with linkages to apprenticeship also serve on the State Board. An Apprenticeship Advisory Committee has been formed as a sub-committee of the State Board with a mission of partnering with business, labor and education to actively promote awareness of, and the benefits and successes of career opportunities in Registered Apprenticeship Occupations.

As Montana's workforce system focuses on at-risk youth and how to increase the skill-level of the current and emerging workforces, the State Board through its standing Apprenticeship Advisory Committee will increasingly examine how to better integrate apprenticeship program resources in the One-Stop Delivery system.

There are three Job Corps centers in Montana and staff from the Job Corps have been very active in the development of Montana's workforce system and have provided representation on nearly all of the Community Management Teams. Job Corps representatives have proactively shared information about their program through a variety of venues, including presentations to CMTs, the State Workforce Investment Board, Youth Council, and at the Annual WIA Conference

F. Additional Policies – Transitional and Reallocation

Transitional Policies:

Any reference to a local area or local areas in the original 2-Year plan will now be considered the statewide regional planning area.

Montana SWIB functions as the statewide WIB and assumes responsibilities previously held by local WIBS.

The SWIB developed a WIA Policy Manual during PY05. The manual is available both hard-copy and on-line.

The Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau will continuously review policies with the intent of providing consistency in treatment of system customers and efficiency in operations.

In accordance with the provisions of Montana's WIA 2-Year Plan, the SWIB initiates consortium agreements with each SWIB certified One-Stop.

In May 2006, the SWIB formed a Youth Council, as a committee that functions collaboratively under the direction of the SWIB.

Administrative Policies:

Service providers will use the Montana Department of Labor's WIA MontanaWorks Management Information System. Service providers' financial systems must meet requirements in the State WIA Policy Manual and OMB Circulars.

VII. Integration of One-Stop Service Delivery

- A. What State policies and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of service delivery through One-Stop Centers such as development of minimum guidelines for operating comprehensive One-Stop Centers, competencies for One-Stop Career Center staff or development of a certification process for One-Stop Centers? (§112(b)(14).)*
- B. What policies or guidance has the State issued to support maximum integration of service delivery through the One-Stop delivery system for both business customers and individual customers? (§112(b)(14).)*

In an effort to ensure that the One-Stop system meets minimum quality standards, including the effective integration of services, and in anticipation of meeting requirements in the Reauthorization of WIA, the State Workforce Investment Board has developed minimum One-Stop Certification Criteria for the State which is attached hereto as Attachment D. This standard certification criteria was developed to promote the belief that the One-Stop System must address local economic issues while supporting overall State economic goals.

Montana currently has 11 certified One-Stop Systems, and 1 is in the final stages of certification awaiting successful sight review. To date, four additional plans are under staff review.

The SWIB One-Stop Committee is responsible for reviewing applications for One-Stop certification, and ensuring all criteria is met. Certification of One-Stops is the responsibility of the State Board. If an applicant wishes to appeal a certification denial, that appeal will be submitted in accordance with State Board policy and provided to the State Board.

In order to ensure maximum flexibility at the local level, the State Board will coordinate with MACo, local Community Management Teams, local economic development organization, local elected officials, one-stop systems, and others to ensure the collaboration and integration of services.

The State Board is preparing strategic and continuous improvement planning sessions in the Spring of 2007. Montana's One-Stop system and established goals will be reviewed and modified as deemed necessary.

The State Board staff also attends the semi-annual TAT sessions provided for WIA service providers as well as JSEC meetings. The purpose is to learn and share, build relationships, invite continuous improvement discussions and become better connected to local and regional economies and workforce and economic development needs within the state one-stop structure.

C. What actions has the State taken to promote identifying One-Stop infrastructure costs and developing models or strategies for local use that support integration? (§112(b)(14).)

Through its Oversight Bureau in the Department of Labor, Montana is considering a comprehensive analysis of the local workforce and One-Stop Center system that would identify opportunities to eliminate waste and/or duplication in an effort to strategically redirect savings to youth and all customer services. The analysis would also identify strategic investment opportunities to reform or enhance the One-Stop Delivery system in order to ensure its effectiveness in helping to improve the State's business climate and strengthen and support its economy. The State Board's goal is for state and local partners to strategically invest public and leveraged private resources into an efficient, seamless workforce system that addresses the needs of business in high growth, high demand occupations.

Co-location is encouraged to the extent possible. Given Montana's rural nature, it is often difficult and expensive to locate facilities large enough to accommodate all of the co-located partners in a one-stop system. The SWIB's certification criteria support "virtual" co-location and the "campus approach" as cost-effective solutions, focusing on integration of services, cooperation, communication, and collaboration.

D. How does the State use the funds reserved for Statewide activities pursuant to §129(b)(2)(B) and 134(a)(2)(B)(v) to assist in the establishment and operation of One-Stop delivery systems? (§112(b)(14).)

Montana has used these funds for capacity building of State Board members by purchasing a teleconference series on workforce development. The Workforce Board Leadership teleconference series is a 3-part series of national teleconferences presented by Greg Newton, Greg Newton Associates. The first in the Series is *Aligning for Action and Achievement*; the second is entitled *Ten Human Resource Challenges and What your Workforce Board Can Do to Make a Difference*;

the final session is *Partnering with Economic Development: Creating the Workforce Advantage*. Each session was recorded and will be used for training and capacity development of board members.

Montana is also a member of numerous national state board and workforce development associations, such as the National Governors Association, National Association of Workforce Boards, National Association of State Workforce Associations, and Workforce Innovations. Montana strives to arrange for the State Board Director, State Board Officers and or other Workforce Services Division staff to attend meetings and forums sponsored by such associations. Additional information and tools come from Job Service Employment Council (JSEC) and Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) sessions hosted by the Workforce Services Division of Montana's Department of Labor & Industry. Finally, national consultants, such as Rick Maher of Maher and Maher and other professional presenters have recently come to Montana for the on-going need to continue with the development of strategies to build integrated, seamless One-Stop and workforce development systems.

Montana is in the final stages of implementing a new Management Information System that will track WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and TAA activities all on an integrated system. This will reduce duplication of services among WIA providers, ensuring better communication and collaboration among systems partners, promote co-enrollment whenever possible, and improve services to customers in all programs.

As required Montana uses statewide activities funds to maintain and disseminate the ETPL statewide to all WIA services providers. This ensures all WIA service providers have ready access to Eligible Training Providers, both in and out of state, and helps them provide quality service to participants.

Statewide activities funds are also used to assist in the establishment of the One-Stop system by holding semi-annual Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) sessions with all WIA service providers. During these sessions we provide opportunities for networking, whereby economic development and education partners are involved in presenting at the sessions. Another goal is to continuously work with service providers in promoting the value of integration of services and collaboration. The number of One-Stops in Montana has quadrupled since becoming a single planning area state, so continuous expansion of this system is on-going.

E. How does the State ensure the full spectrum of assets in the One-Stop delivery system support human capital solutions for businesses and individual customers broadly? (§112(b)(14).)

Montana is committed to tailoring its workforce services to meet the needs of a demand driven system. In an effort to meet these needs, the State Board is committed to promoting a "Business One-Stop" model for delivery of business services. The State will promote increased communication and collaboration among workforce development, economic development, and education. In addition, it is the vision of the State, utilizing the Executive Pulse Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program, to build a dynamic business retention plan that is inclusive of economic, workforce, and community development. The BEAR program established a database for business trends in Montana. To pave the way for BEAR to be accessible across the state, the Governor's Office of Economic Development recently purchased access to the BEAR software for the entire state. The Montana Economic Development Association (MEDA) office is

administering and coordinating the program for the Department of Commerce and the Governor's Office of Economic Development. Montana has identified 12 Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs) for the purpose of regional economic growth and regional coordination. To date, the BEAR program has been implemented in communities within nine regions, and is in the discussion and planning phases in several communities throughout all regions.

Members of the Governor's cabinet continue to endorse a State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, the Departments of Labor and Industry that include representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison, Commerce, Public Health and Human Services including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Public Instruction, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least once a month to identify and discuss issues of mutual interest, and improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services.

VIII. Administration and Oversight of Local Workforce Investment System

A. Local Area Designations

1. *Identify the State's designated local workforce investment areas and the date of the most recent area designation, including whether the State is currently re-designating local areas pursuant to the end of the subsequent designation period for areas designated in the previous State Plan. (§§112(b)(5).)*
2. *Include a description of the process used to designate such areas. Describe how the State considered the extent to which such local areas are consistent with labor market areas: geographic areas served by local and intermediate education agencies, post-secondary education institutions and area vocational schools; and all other criteria identified in section 116(a)(1) in establishing area boundaries, to assure coordinated planning. Describe the State Board's role, including all recommendations made on local designation requests pursuant to section 116(a)(4). (§§112(b)(5) and 116(a)(1).)*

Montana has two (2) designated local workforce investment areas; The 10 county Concentrated Employment Program (CEP) local area, and the 46 county Balance of State (BOS) local area. These areas were designated under the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

The CEP is an automatic designated area as provided in the WIA of 1998. Montana does not meet the population criteria for more than one other local area, and therefore the BOS is also considered an automatic designated area.

The state of Montana has a small population spread over a large geographic area. In addition, the rural nature of the state presents unique challenges for the workforce system. Montana applied for and was granted a waiver in October 2005 to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a State Board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area. In an effort to create efficiencies needed to accommodate the significant and continuing decline in funding, Governor Schweitzer designated two areas which will form a consortium and function as a single statewide planning area. Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f),

which permits a state board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area.

3. *Describe the appeals process used by the State to hear appeals of local area designations referred to in §112 (b)(5) and 116(a)(5).*

A petitioner for local area designation may appeal the action of the State Workforce Investment Board or the Governor by requesting an independent review. Such a request must be in writing from the local Chief Elected Official to the Governor within thirty (30) days of the date of denial and must include factors the petitioner deems necessary to be considered in the review. Upon request, the Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau will provide a hearing by an impartial hearing officer that has no interest in the outcome. The hearing officer will make a recommendation to the Governor regarding the appeal within sixty (60) days from receipt of the notice to provide a hearing. The Governor will issue a final decision on designation.

The petitioner may appeal the Governor's decision to the Secretary if the final decision is an adverse decision or if no designation is made. (State WIA Policy Manual Section A. 1.60)

B. *Local Workforce Investment Boards -- Identify the criteria the State has established to be used by the chief elected official(s) in the local areas for the appointment of local board members based on the requirements of section 117. (§§112(b)(6), 117(b).)*

Upon approval of the requested waiver to 20CFR 661.300(f), the State Workforce Investment Board assumed the functions of local boards. The Governor takes this into consideration when making board appointments.

C. *How will your State build the capacity of Local Boards to develop and manage high performing local workforce investment systems? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(14).)*

Upon approval of the requested waiver to 20CFR 661.300(f), the State Workforce Investment Board assumed the functions of local boards. The Governor takes this into consideration when making board appointments.

The State Board is preparing strategic and continuous improvement planning sessions in the Spring of 2007 regarding board structure, roles, and responsibilities. Many of the ideas being explored come from information obtained from attendance to meetings and forums such as the National Governors Association, National Association of Workforce Boards, National Association of State Workforce Associations, and Workforce Innovations. Additional information and tools come from Job Service Employment Council (JSEC) and Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) sessions hosted by the Workforce Services Division of Montana's Department of Labor & Industry. National consultants, such as Rick Maher of Maher and Maher and other professional presenters have come to Montana for the on-going need to continue with the development of strategies to build integrated, seamless One-Stop and workforce development systems.

D. *Local Planning Process -- Describe the State mandated requirements for local workforce areas' strategic planning. What assistance does the State provide to local areas to facilitate this process, (112(b)(2) and 20 CFR 661.350(a)(13).) including:*

1. *What oversight of the local planning process is provided, including receipt and review of plans and negotiation of performance agreements?*

Montana has recently been designated as a single statewide planning area. The state board structure assumes local board responsibilities. The Governor has designated the Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau as the entity that monitors program operators annually for compliance with applicable laws and regulations in accordance with the uniform administrative requirements and 20 CFR 667.410. The State monitoring system enables the Governor to determine whether a local operator will be disapproved for failure to make acceptable progress in addressing deficiencies (if any), as required in WIA section 118(d)(1).

The State Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau, on behalf of the Governor, and the State Workforce Board's Administrative Entity jointly negotiate performance agreements with US Dept of Labor.

Semi-annual Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) sessions are provided to all WIA service providers. Networking opportunities are also provided, whereby economic development and education partners are involved in presenting at the sessions. A primary goal is to continuously work with service providers in promoting the value of integration of services and collaboration. The number of One-Stops in Montana has quadrupled since becoming a single planning area state, so continuous expansion of this system is on-going. The TAT sessions also provide updates pertaining to WIA, State Board, performance, manual materials, as well as "how to" sessions" i.e. understanding and improving program performance, round table discussions.

2. *How does the local plan approval process ensure that local plans are consistent with State performance goals and State strategic direction?*

Montana applied for and was granted a waiver in October 2005 to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a State Board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area. Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a state board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area.

E. *Regional Planning (§§112(b)(2), 116(c).)*

1. *Describe any intra-State or inter-State regions and their corresponding performance measures.*

The structure of the State's local areas, one of which is predominantly contains Montana's most rural areas, intra-state activities are based on necessity, and have resulted in informal regions being developed for the purposes of local planning and development. However, Montana is one of 13 regions across the country to successfully compete for the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant. Montana's proposal

focuses on 32 rural counties in the eastern part of the state, and will provide training to build a bio-product workforce, especially in occupations related to bio lubricants and bio fuels. Partners within the Governor's office, Department of Commerce, DLI, the university system, the State Board and others are collaborating to ensure a successful WIRED project in Montana, which creates jobs in high growth, high wage energy industry, and improve the economic outlook for the most rural parts of the state including 6 of Montana's 7 Reservations.

Montana is also one of 5 states that have partnered to form Rockies Energy Workforce Collaboration (REWC). Other states participating are: Colorado, Wyoming, North Dakota, and Utah. The initial scope of the Collaboration is the development of the vast energy resource in the Rockies to ensure an adequate supply of skilled energy workers in the region. The Collaboration provides a forum for industry, education, public workforce systems and economic development to dialogue, develop strategy and solution-based workforce actions to leverage staff, resources, and public and private investments. The initial scope of the Collaboration is in oil and gas, addressing current and anticipated shortages in the workforce. Participation by DLI on the coalition is critical to building regional and sectoral partnerships that will strengthen Montana's energy industry, workforce, and economy.

2. *Include a discussion of the purpose of these designations and the activities (such as regional planning, information sharing and/or coordination activities) that will occur to help improve performance. For example, regional planning efforts could result in the sharing of labor market information or in the coordination of transportation and support services across the boundaries of local areas.*

The designation as a single statewide planning area is for the purpose of creating efficiency. With limited funding, it is essential that the state identify every opportunity for eliminating duplication to maximize opportunities for our citizens and businesses. This also ensures better alignment of workforce services with economic development, community development and education services and will facilitate improved coordination of state funds to serve high priority groups. Montana's engagement with projects such as; WIRED and the Rockies Energy Workforce Collaboration, provides a forum for industry, education, public workforce systems, and economic development to dialogue, develop strategy and solution based workforce actions to leverage staff, resources, and public and private investments. These projects are critical to building regional and sectoral partnerships. The partnerships will strengthen Montana's industry, workforce, and economy by creating jobs in high growth, high wage energy industry, and thus improving the economic outlook for the most rural parts of the state.

3. *For inter-State regions (if applicable), describe the roles of the respective Governors and State and local Boards.*

Montana has not formally created either intra- or inter-state regions. The structure of the State's local areas, one of which predominantly contains Montana's most rural areas, intra-state activities is based on necessity, and has resulted in informal regions being developed for the purposes of local planning and service delivery.

Communications have ensued with neighboring states to discuss sectoral and regional strategies and promote collaboration between the states, and solicit best practices. The State Board works to coordinate and promote these efforts, which include WIRED: Montana's Agro-Energy Plan, and the Rockies Energy Workforce Collaboration

F. Allocation Formulas (112(b)(12).)

1. *If applicable, describe the methods and factors (including weights assigned to each factor) your State will use to distribute funds to local areas for the 30% discretionary formula adult employment and training funds and youth funds pursuant to §§ 128(b)(3)(B) and 133(b)(3)(B).*

Montana follows the allocation formula procedure outlined in Section 133(b)(2)(A). There is no additional allocation methodology used for 30 percent discretionary formula funds.

2. *Describe how the allocation methods and factors help ensure that funds are distributed equitably throughout the State and that there will be no significant shifts in funding levels to a local area on a year-to-year basis.*

Allocation methods and factors include:

- Total unemployment for designated Montana Areas of Substantial Unemployment
- Excess unemployment
- Number of economically disadvantaged for the Balance of State (BOS), or number below Montana's specified state income threshold for the Concentrated Employment Program (CEP)

Allocations are calculated for local areas based on their relative share of the statewide total. There have been no large shifts in allocations between local areas since WIA's inception. The hold-harmless clause has protected funding in cases where small shifts have occurred. The Governor and the State Board will review the factors each year to ensure the two local areas receive an equitable share of the allocations.

3. *Describe the State's allocation formula for dislocated worker funds under §133(b)(2)(B).*

For the Dislocated Worker allocation, the WIA requires the State to allocate funds based on a formula prescribed by the Governor. The Governor may amend the formula not more than once for each program year, and the formula is required to use the most appropriate information available to distribute amounts to address the State's dislocated worker needs.

Montana will allocate funds to the local areas for dislocated worker training and employment activities using the factors as prescribed by the WIA. The Governor and the State Board will review the factors each year to confirm the weight given each factor to ensure the two local areas receive an equitable share of the formula allocation. Any recommendation to modify the existing formula would be submitted by the State Board to the Governor. The Montana distribution formula is as follows:

- 1/6 based on the number of insured unemployed
- 1/6 based on the number of excess unemployed greater than 4.5 percent
- 1/6 based on the number of mass layoffs during a specified time period
- 1/6 based on annual average declining employment by industry for the most recent two years
- 1/6 based on agriculture unemployment
- 1/6 based on long-term unemployed (those who have exhausted their Unemployment Insurance benefits)

4. *Describe how the individuals and entities on the State board were involved in the development of the methods and factors, and how the State consulted with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining such distribution.*

The standard formula allocation method for distribution of Adult and Youth funds does not require input by the State Board or Chief Elected Officials (CEOs). Since implementation of the WIA, both the State Board and local areas have had opportunities to weigh in on the formula distributions. The State Board may make policy recommendations to the Governor to adjust the manner in which the allocations are distributed to the local areas.

G. Provider Selection Policies (§§112(b)(17)(A)(iii), 122, 134(d)(2)(F).)

1. *Identify the policies and procedures, to be applied by local areas, for determining eligibility of local level training providers, how performance information will be used to determine continuing eligibility and the agency responsible for carrying out these activities.*

The previous Local Board structure adopted a policy that automatically placed all Montana post-secondary educational institutions and programs that are Higher Education Act Pell eligible, and all Montana Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) programs on the initial WIA Eligible Provider List.

Programs not meeting the requirements listed above are required to submit an initial application to the State Board's administrative entity. The administrative entity then reviews the application and places the provider on the local workforce area's list if the training program is approved. The local area list is then forwarded to the Montana Department of Labor and Industry (DLI). DLI has 30 days to review and verify the information provided on the application. The Department of Labor is responsible for maintaining and disseminating the State's Eligible Provider List.

The Montana Department of Labor and Industry has final decision-making responsibility on removal of a program from the list. Training providers may appeal a decision on removal from the list to the Department of Labor and Industry, with the Governor having the final authority to rule on a grievance or appeal.

Montana has received a waiver from the US Department of Labor exempting the State from the collection of Eligible Training Provider performance through June 30, 2007, and has applied for a permanent extension of this waiver. The extension will allow the State Board and the State to work with providers to determine the most efficient method of

collecting performance data, and to alleviate providers' concerns regarding the data being requested.

The State Board will review and adopt appropriate performance standards based on final resolution of the issues presented in the waiver pending approval by the US Department of Labor.

2. *Describe how the State solicited recommendations from local boards and training providers and interested members of the public, including representatives of business and labor organizations, in the development of these policies and procedures.*

Montana's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) policy was developed in collaboration through the WIA ITA/ETPL Implementation Task Force. The Task Force consisted of members from partner agencies (including Department of Health and Human Services, Voc-Rehab, Adult Ed, Higher Education), service providers, state board members, private industry council members included interested members of the public, representatives of business and labor organizations, and staff from the local administrative entity and the Department of Labor and Industry. The task force was formed to examine ways to establish an eligible training provider list and help streamline the decision making process for State and Local Workforce Investment Boards to recommend action steps. The State and previous Local Boards adopted the Eligible Training Provider policies and procedures recommended by the WIA implementation task force in 2000. The current board structure continues to maintain the adopted Eligible Training Provider policies and procedures.

3. *How will the State update and expand the State's eligible training provider list?*

The Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau, on behalf of the Governor, maintains the current Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Once a provider has been approved, their eligibility date will be entered on the list and participants eligible to receive training may begin selecting the training programs being offered. The Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau maintains a distribution list for parties interested in the ETPL. The list is also available on the Internet.

Updates to the ETPL are distributed when any change is made to the Eligible Training Provider List. Montana currently has a waiver exempting performance data on eligible training providers. Performance data on Eligible Training Providers will be added to the list as soon as it is available, and will be updated on an annual basis.

Expansion of Montana's ETPL is encouraged but not actively sought after. Service providers and participants interested in specific training programs are encouraged to persuade providers to apply for eligibility.

4. *Describe the procedures the Governor has established for providers of training services to appeal a denial of eligibility by the local board or the designated State agency, a termination of eligibility or other action by the board or agency, or a denial of eligibility by a One-Stop operator. Such procedures must include the opportunity for a hearing and time limits to ensure prompt resolution.*

The Governor has designated procedures for appeal of eligibility. The following is an excerpt from the Department of Labor and Industry's WIA State Policy Manual that defines the process.

I. Appeal Procedures

The Workforce Investment Act requires the Governor to establish procedures for providers of training services to appeal a denial of eligibility or termination of eligibility.

20 CFR Part 667.640(b)

- A. Basis for Appeal: Eligible providers of training services may file an appeal due to:
 - 1. Denial by a local workforce investment Board or the designated State Agency under WIA Section 122 (b), (c), or (e);
 - 2. Termination or eligibility or other action by a Local Board or State Agency under WIA Section 122(f);
 - 3. Denial of eligibility as a provider of on-the-job training or customized training by a One-Stop operator under WIA Section 122 (h).
- B. Filing an Appeal
 - 1. Timeline for Filing an Appeal: Appeals must be in writing and submitted within forty-five (45) days of being notified of a denial or termination to:

State WIA Equal Opportunity Officer
Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau
P.O. Box 1728
Helena, MT 59624
 - 2. The appeal must be signed by an authorized individual from the training provider and should include:
 - a. Name of the training provider;
 - b. Address and phone number of the training provider
 - c. An explanation of why an appeal is being filed
 - 3. The State WIA Equal Opportunity Officer will assist the training provider in filing a written appeal and advise the training provider of the opportunity of a hearing will be provided within thirty (30) calendar days of the filing of the appeal.
 - a. The Legal Services Division of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry will provide an impartial hearings officer to conduct the hearing process.
 - (1) Interested parties will be provided:
 - (a) Notice of hearing;
 - (b) The manner in which the hearing will be conducted;
 - (c) Written notice of the date, time, and place of hearing;
 - (d) An opportunity to present evidence;
 - (e) Written decision;
 - (2) The training provider or respondent may with good cause, request a rescheduling of the hearings;
 - (3) The training provider will have the burden of establishing the facts and the entitlement to the relief requested;

(4) The training provider or respondent may be represented by an attorney or other representative.

4. The hearing officer will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the notice to provide a hearing. The Governor will issue a final decision.

II. Decisions Under The State Appeal Process May Not Be Appealed To The Secretary.

5. *Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the State level to award grants and contracts for activities under title I of WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts. (§112(b)(16).)*

Provisions for awarding grants and contracts from funds that are not formula allocated are in the Montana Administrative Rules governing all state agencies. The State's Procurement Procedures for Equipment and Supplies and Procedures for Obtaining Professional Services are available on The State of Montana website.

Potential bidders are made aware of available funding to be competitively awarded by notices published in the major Montana daily newspapers, noticed on the State Bulletin Board, and sent to all interested parties, as determined by a list maintained for this purpose. Any grants or solicitations for service providers will be posted on the Department's WIA web site. The State Department of Administration posts all Requests for Proposals and invitations for bid on their website for public access.

These are the policies in place for competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used to award grants and contracts for activities under Title I of WIA.

6. *Identify the criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth activities, including criteria that the Governor and local boards will use to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities. (§112(b)(18)(B).)*

Montana applied for and was granted a waiver in October 2005 to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a State Board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area. Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a state board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area.

The State Workforce Investment Board will solicit youth providers through the open/competitive Request for Proposal process and base youth provider selection on advice from the Youth Council. The Governor encourages the State Board to consider the following criteria in the selection of youth providers. The criteria includes but is not limited to:

- Successful fiscal controls in place;
- Experience with youth and with coordinating youth services;
- Demonstrated effectiveness;

- Evidence of coordination and collaboration with other entities with programs for serving youth most in need, such as out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm-worker youth, and other youth at risk;
- Performance (past performance, current performance, meeting and exceeding performance goals)

The criteria used by the State Workforce Investment Board to determine effective youth service providers include:

- a locally established system for youth development, education and training that promotes and enhances academic achievement, high school graduation, work-readiness skills, post-secondary readiness, occupational skill achievement and employment readiness;
- individual, in-depth, comprehensive assessments that will allow services to be tailored to each youth's specific needs;
- services tied to the age and maturity level of each youth;
- service strategies that will be sequenced over time to maximize learning gains and assimilation of appropriate work behaviors;
- service strategies for drop outs that include efforts in assisting youth in achieving high school credentials;
- service strategies that emphasize contextual learning opportunities that combine school-based learning opportunities and work-based opportunities.

Additionally, agencies desiring to become eligible youth providers will be required to provide eligibility determination; comprehensive assessments to allow services to be tailored to each youth's specific needs; basic skill development and academic enrichment activities; pre-program and progress testing; meaningful work experience; pre-employment/work maturity skills training; necessary support services to assist participants to be successful in the work experience; academic and academic enrichment activities; ongoing mentoring opportunities for youth with qualified adults; labor market orientation; personal financial management and other life skills training; leadership, decision-making and citizenship skills; and community service.

The State Workforce Investment Board plans to solicit youth providers through the Request for Proposal Process for services to start July 1, 2007. Until the solicitation and selection process takes place in 2007, the providers currently serving youth will continue to provide services.

As required in the Workforce Investment Act, the list of eligible youth service providers is available either electronically, or by requesting a copy from State. Interested persons may also request the list from the State Workforce Investment Board's administrative entity.

H. One-Stop Policies (§112(D)(14).)

1. *Describe how the services provided by each of the required and optional One-Stop partners will be coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system. Include how the State will consolidate Wagner-Peyser Act funds to avoid duplication of core services. (§112(b)(8)(A).)*

Montana's strategy to ensure services are coordinated and provided by each of the required and optional One-Stop partners through local One-Stop systems will be discussed in Section IX.A.1., "One-Stop Delivery Strategies." The State has provided guidance and technical assistance to ensure that Wagner-Peyser services are delivered through local One-Stop systems in ways that minimize duplication of costs and services. The State Board is committed to exploring ways to maximize the amount of public and private workforce resources expended on training in high-growth, high demand occupations. Improving coordination among partner agencies at the State level, and allowing maximum flexibility for development of the system at the local level while leveraging the most resources, will help the State Board explore issues such as how to better align Wagner-Peyser services with WIA Title I funds to avoid the duplication of services.

2. *Describe how the State helps local areas identify areas needing improvement and how technical assistance will be provided.*

The State Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau assists the local providers in identifying areas needing improvement through fiscal and compliance monitoring and through semi-annual Technical Assistance Trainings. The State Board is advised through reports from the Bureau as to the monitoring findings and corrective action strategies that are identified by the Bureau. The State Board and the Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau are committed to continually improving State-level technical assistance and capacity building.

3. *Identify any additional State mandated One-Stop partners (such as TANF or Food Stamp Employment and Training) and how their programs and services are integrated into the One-Stop Career Centers.*

Montana has not identified additional mandated partners. Collaboration with TANF and Food Stamp Employment and Training programs, Adult Education, Post Secondary Career and Technical Education, Veterans, Vocational Rehabilitation, Welfare-to-Work, Older Americans Act, Job Corps, Housing and Urban Development E & T programs and Unemployment Insurance have been in place for many years, even prior to the Workforce Investment Act. Community level providers of these programs as well as other mandatory and non-mandatory partners in twenty-one community-defined geographic regions joined forces and established Local Management Teams under a One-Stop Implementation grant in 1998. Following WIA implementation the Local Management Teams became known as Community Management Teams (CMTs). While not required under WIA or by the State Workforce Investment Board, the CMTs have continued their work on integrating and coordinating services at the most local level. The work of the CMTs has laid a firm foundation for the One-Stop delivery system under WIA.

Through the CMTs, formal service coordination processes were developed and have exceeded the expectations for partner involvement by including many community service providers with a wide range of disciplines as available in their particular areas. By including these additional service providers in the CMT, communities now have better coordination of all services, not just employment and training. Referrals are made to other agencies and institutions for services that are not directly available.

- I. *Oversight/Monitoring Process -- Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the State utilizes to move the system toward the State's vision and achieve the goals identified above, such as the use of mystery shoppers, performance agreements. (§112(b)(14).)*

Montana's vision for the workforce system includes implementing policies and strategies that will promote integration of services and the participation of education, and further develop a seamless one-stop system. We also will work to increase the collaborative partnerships both in Montana and with our surrounding provinces and states to expand upon our resource-based economic structure to promote a Value-Added Economy.

Montana utilizes the monitoring and oversight process and procedures to work toward this vision and achieve our workforce goals by developing and maintaining a close working relationship between the State Board and the Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau. This Bureau is responsible for performing WIA and Wagner-Peyser monitoring and oversight functions for the state. Therefore, by ensuring timely and open communications between the State Board and the Bureau, the State Board is consistently kept informed regarding any potential concerns or compliance issues that may adversely affect the state's ability to realize its vision of a fully integrated and seamless system, and affords the State Board the opportunity to provide assistance to system partners to address and correct concerns before any adverse affect is realized by the system. In addition, the monitoring process ensures less duplication of services, which is a goal established by the State Board.

The State is also looking to begin implementation of the Integrated Performance Information (IPI) Blueprint that was generated as a result of the US Department of Labor sponsored "IPI Project". This will require information sharing across agencies and programs, ensure common reporting for performance systems management, and encourage partnerships at all levels of the workforce system. Montana intends to begin implementation of the Integrated Performance Information (IPI) Blueprint that was generated as a result of the US Department of Labor sponsored "IPI Project". This will require information sharing across agencies and programs, ensure common reporting for performance systems management, and encourage partnerships at all levels of the workforce system. While the full scale vision of implementation as not yet been realized, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), and Research & Analysis (R &A), using UI data, have been collaborating on data exchange. The data exchange is used to help with the assessment of performance and outcomes for planning purposes in the post-secondary education system. The State Board intends to publish the common measures identified in the IPI project as a historical scorecard for all partners in the workforce system, by publishing the performance data annually on the State Board's *Snapshot* document.

The Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau, as oversight entity for statewide workforce programs, has been designated the authority to conduct annual onsite monitoring, on behalf of the Governor, of the local workforce areas. The State's monitoring process includes both desk and onsite reviews of the local provider, and a representative sample of WIA Title IB adult, youth, and dislocated worker service provider sites throughout the state.

The State monitors to:

- a. Ensure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements;

- b. Ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations in accordance with the State's monitoring system;
- c. Determine that policies and procedures are in place to ensure expenditures have been properly made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and the regulations in this part;
- d. Determine whether or not there is compliance with other provisions of the Act and the WIA regulations and other applicable laws and regulations;
- e. Ensure that established policies to achieve program quality and outcomes meet the objectives of the Act and the WIA regulations, including policies relating to: the provision of services by One-Stop Centers; eligible providers of training services; and eligible providers of youth activities;
- f. Determine if sub recipients and contractors have demonstrated substantial compliance with WIA requirements;
- g. Determine whether a local plan will be disapproved for failure to make acceptable progress in addressing deficiencies, as required in WIA section 118(d)(1);
- h. Enable the Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau to ensure compliance with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements of WIA section 188 and 29 CFR part 37.

Compliance reviews include an entrance interview, a review of files, interviews with appropriate staff and an exit interview. Monitoring reports identifying concerns are issued to Local Areas for which Local Areas must submit corrective action plans. Corrective action plans are tracked to ensure that action has been taken to correct deficiencies. The State provides technical assistance as needed resulting from noncompliance issues discovered during monitoring.

The Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau oversight and monitoring includes monitoring the Governor's discretionary funds that are set aside for statewide activities and Rapid Response.

J. Grievance Procedures. Attach a copy of the State's grievance procedures for participants and other affected parties (including service providers.) (§122(g) and 181(cc).)

The Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau, within the Department of Labor and Industry, published a WIA Policy Manual. A copy of the Grievance Procedures for participants and other affected parties is attached hereto as Attachment C.

K. Describe the following State policies or procedures that have been developed to facilitate effective local workforce investment systems (§§112(b)(17)(A) and 112 (b)(2),):

- 1. *State guidelines for the selection of One-Stop providers by local boards;*

Montana applied for and was granted a waiver in October 2005 to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a State Board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area. Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a state board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area. The One-Stop Committee and State Board are now responsible for this process.

2. *Procedures to resolve impasse situations at the local level in developing memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to ensure full participation of all required partners in the One-Stop delivery system;*

In order to be considered for certification as a local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) One-Stop System, a Business Plan must be submitted by the Local Community Management Team (CMT) to the State Board for approval. Criteria for certification includes submission of a detailed written agreement or Operating Plan describing roles and responsibilities for partners inclusive of a detailed management structure. Agreements also provide provisions for Dispute or Impasse Resolution. Upon successful certification a Consortium Agreement is signed between the State Board and the consortium of local partners outlining Purpose, Parties to the Agreement, Responsibilities of the Consortium and Responsibilities of the SWIB.

3. *Criteria by which the State will determine if local Boards can run programs in-house;*

Montana applied for and was granted a waiver in October 2005 to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a State Board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area. Montana is formally seeking a Waiver renewal to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits a state board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single local area, to a statewide regional planning area.

4. *Performance information that on-the-job training and customized training providers must provide;*

Because on-the-job training is provided directly by an employer, the Governor has determined not to collect performance information for on-the-job training employers. On-the-job training is not required to be on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and is excluded from the requirement to collect performance data.

Employers could potentially utilize training providers on Montana's ETPL to provide customized training. Customized training providers would be subject to providing ETPL performance data to the State.

Montana currently has a waiver exemption regarding training provider performance reporting. State staff is currently determining how best to capture performance data for training providers. Montana has applied for a permanent request that follows WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B) and WIA Regulation at 20 CFR Part 661.420.

This waiver request will:

1. Permanently waive performance in subsequent eligibility determination process for eligible training providers to begin in PY2007; and
2. Waive the eligibility determination process for a State University, Community or Tribal College, or Center of Applied Technology who is adding new programs to their training curriculum.
5. *Reallocation policies;*

The Governor may, in accordance with Title I Section 128 (c) and 133(c), deobligate youth and adult employment and training funds from local areas that fail to obligate 80 percent of a program year's allocation. These funds will be reallocated to eligible local areas based on the formula specified in the Act. The State will allow voluntary deobligation that allows a local workforce investment area to transfer funds to the other local area if the area wishes to accept the funds.

6. *State policies for approving local requests for authority to transfer funds (not to exceed 20%) between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams at the local level;*

The State Board may transfer up to 20 percent of a program year allocation for adult or dislocated worker employment and training activities between the two programs. The State Board may not automatically transfer funds to or from the youth program.

It is the State's policy that, before making any such transfer, the State Board must:

- Incorporate the modification to the state plan or be presented as an amendment to that plan
- Obtain the Governor's prior written approval.

7. *Policies related to displaced homemakers, nontraditional training for low-income individuals, older workers, low-income individuals, disabled individuals and others with multiple barriers to employment and training;*

Montana's diverse customer group of job seekers includes displaced homemakers, welfare recipients and other low-income individuals, older workers, disabled individuals, and others with multiple barriers to employment including ex-offenders.

Services are provided to displaced homemakers, welfare recipients and other low-income individuals, older workers, disabled individuals, and others with multiple barriers to employment through the one-stop system.

In accordance with WIA, recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals are given priority for intensive and training services when funding to local areas is limited. State policy provided that services would also be provided to special participant populations who are at or below a level of self-sufficiency, or have one of the following barriers: (1) older workers; (2) individuals with language barriers; (3) individuals facing cultural barriers, including American Indians; (4) individuals not receiving services from other programs in WIA. The State Workforce Investment Board delegated identification of other targeted populations to the local boards and community management teams. Self-sufficiency for this purpose is defined for adults as: meeting basic expenses without subsidies; independence from federal or state assistance; access to affordable health care; and a wage of at least \$9.90 per hour for an individual. Self-sufficiency for dislocated workers will be 90% of the layoff wage or wages equaling the adult self-sufficiency level, whichever is higher.

The State Board has the responsibility to assure that written policies and procedures are developed and communicated to all One-Stop Centers and service providers. Persons with disabilities will be afforded opportunities for training activities designed to improve

participation in the workforce and lead to higher earnings for participants who successfully complete them. Individuals with other employment issues will be afforded opportunities for participation in training activities designed to improve participation in the workforce and lead to higher earnings for individuals who successfully complete them. Training activities for persons will be provided in the context of the state's vision to provide universal access for all customers.

Services to targeted populations including displaced homemakers, welfare recipients and other low-income individuals, older workers, disabled individuals, and others with multiple barriers to employment including ex-offenders are no less than those individuals outside this population receive including:

- Job search and placement assistance, Adult Basic Education, and career counseling;
- Employment information on job vacancy listings, information on skills necessary to obtain employment in specific jobs, information on local demand occupations and the earnings and skill requirements for such occupations;
- Performance and cost information on eligible providers of training and education;
- Information on the availability of supportive services, including child care and transportation, and referral to such services, as appropriate;
- Information regarding filing claims for unemployment benefits;
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid for training and education; and
- Development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, and the combination of service activities necessary to achieve the employment goals.

8. *If you did not delegate this responsibility to local boards, provide your State's definition regarding the sixth youth eligibility criterion at section 101(13)(C)(iv) ("an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment"). (§§ 112(b)(18)(A) and 20 CFR 664.210).*

In 2005 Montana transitioned to a single statewide planning area and in 2006 a new Youth Council was formed. There were two versions of the Sixth Barrier Definition used by the two local areas, CEP and BOS. The Youth Council approved a definition, which merged the two variations of the Sixth Barrier Definition and is currently being used. "An individual (including a youth with a disability) who has no vocational/employment goal **and** has below average grades **or** has a poor work history (to include no work history) **or** has been fired from a job in the last six calendar months." Montana's State Board closely follows this recommendation when defining youth criterion.

IX. Service Delivery

Describe the approaches the State will use to provide direction and support to local Boards and the One-Stop Career Center delivery system on the strategic priorities to guide investments, structure business engagement, and inform service delivery approaches for all customers. (§§112(b)(17)(A) Activities could include:

A. One-Stop Service Delivery Strategies: (§112(b)(2) and 111(d)(2).)

1. How will the services provided by each of the required and optional One-Stop partners be coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system? (§112(b)(8)(A).)

A statewide MOU for the One-Stop Delivery System is in place and annually updated. The MOU is entered into by and between the Montana State Workforce Board, acting as the Local Workforce Investment Board, the required Partner Agencies, Voluntary Partner Agencies, Tribal Government Leaders, and the Governor of Montana as the Chief Local Official. For the first time in Montana history all Tribal leaders representing 7 Reservations have signed and entered into this partnership agreement.

As part of Montana's One-Stop Certification Process local entities requesting certification will submit a business plan through their Community Management Team to the State Board. The business plan must provide a written agreement or Operating Plan that details management structure and the roles and responsibilities of each partner at the site. For those with collaborating partners off-site, roles and responsibilities will be defined in an addendum to the co-located agreement. All collaborating partners, those on and off site, must have the appropriate staff trained in the services provided by other partners, know who are the contact person for each partner is, and can seamlessly refer clients or participants to the appropriate entity within each partner agreement.

Montana currently has 11 certified One-Stop Centers; 1 is in the final stages of certification awaiting successful sight reviews. To date, four additional plans are under staff review.

The above outcome aligns with the priorities of the Governor which include: expanding the One-Stop System in Montana; increasing state and local partnerships and linkages between the education, workforce, and economic development systems; the development of strategies to build an integrated, seamless One-Stop system; encourage maximum local flexibility for customizing a demand-driven system; and reforming the system to eliminate duplicative administrative costs and maximize services.

2. How are youth formula programs funded under §128(b)(2)(A) integrated in the One-Stop system?

Expansive, high quality, integrated youth services will ensure broader choices for youth completing, or otherwise leaving, secondary school. Providers of youth services are selected through the Request for Proposal process with selection based on the highest standards. The SWIB Youth Council works to develop linkages and coordination strategies between and among multiple youth programs throughout the one-stop system. Youth formula programs are co-located in One-Stop Centers in Montana's two workforce areas. For those that are not in a

position of hotelling or co-location service delivery is dependent upon partnerships, referrals, and collaboration to ensure all Montanans have access to information and services. Referrals between agencies reflect the integrated nature of the system under development.

3. *What minimum service delivery requirements does the State mandate in a comprehensive One-Stop Centers or an affiliate site?*

At a minimum each of Montana's One-Stop Centers and other access points such as Job Service Workforce Centers and WIA Title IB adult, youth and dislocated worker affiliate sites will provide access to the following services whether through direct services, providing information, or referral services.

- Labor Market Information, Career Development Services, Assessment Services, Services for Special Programs such as Veterans services, TANF or Voc-Rehab services, Unemployment Insurance Services including claim filing assistance, Automated registration in the Wagner-Peyser data base and Labor Exchange Services that include outreach, intake and orientation to the information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system, job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, career counseling and initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs.

4. *What tools and products has the State developed to support service delivery in all One-Stop Centers Statewide?*

"Prove It" testing software is in all Workforce Service Centers as of July 2006. This testing software will primarily be used through internet access, however, a few offices may also use stand alone PC's using a CD-Rom to use the software. This will allow the State to standardize testing software used by Job Service offices to ensure consistency in testing when customers require testing services. "Prove It" will provide value to customers and upgrading software to allow tests to be consistently administered across the state.

Montana also administers several assessment instruments, these include: Copes, Cops and Caps, Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and the Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE) and the ONET Ability Profiler. The State is also committed to continuously striving to standardize training as possible to ensure consistency and accuracy. Montana recently selected the TABE as the unified assessment tool for the collection of math and reading scores required by WIA Title I and Title II. In 2006, Quality Assessment Trainings were conducted throughout the state for WIA Title I and Title II program providers. TABE tests may be administered by TABE certified WIA Title IB Case or referred to an Adult Basic Education entity. Due to the rural nature of Montana, the Quality Assessment Training allows for a more timely collection of the required data when services are not accessible through Adult Basic Education entities in local areas.

5. *What models/templates/approaches does the State recommend and/or mandate for service delivery in the One-Stop Centers? For example, do all One-Stop Centers have a uniform method of organizing their service delivery to business customers? Is there a common individual assessment process utilized in every One-Stop Center? Are all One-Stop Centers required to have a resource center that is open to anyone?*

Montana supports service delivery efforts and approaches that are efficient, effective and customer-focused. For example, delivery of Wagner-Peyser services to business customers is uniformly organized through the statewide network of 24 local Job Service Workforce Centers all of which are partners in Montana's One-Stop system. In addition to labor exchange services, each Center is required to provide intensive services to business customers through the Business Advocacy Program. This "next level" of service goes beyond labor exchange to provide basic Human Resource management services.

Montana will continue to support technical assistance and training that will result in improved collaboration and coordination of service delivery among the various One-Stop system partners at the local community level.

B. *Workforce Information – A fundamental component of a demand-driven workforce investment system is the integration and application of the best available State and local workforce information including, but not limited to, economic data, labor market information, census data, private sources of workforce information produced by trade associations and others, educational data, job vacancy surveys, transactional data from job boards, and information obtained directly from businesses. (§§111(d)(8), 112(b)(1), and 134(d)(2)(E).)*

1. *Describe how the State will integrate workforce information into its planning and decision making at the State and local level, including State and local Boards, One-Stop operations, and case manager guidance.*

The Research & Analysis Bureau created a strategic plan that focuses on delivering demand driven career and labor market information to workforce development agencies. This comprehensive plan focuses on meeting the needs of State Boards, One-Stop operations, and workforce development staff. Efforts will focus on enhancing awareness of available labor market information and specifically that of a local nature (state, county, metropolitan and micropolitan). The Research & Analysis Bureau will work with labor market information users to provide the necessary data at the appropriate level of detail, including employment projections for future years. Additionally, the Research & Analysis Bureau will continue to present timely and relevant presentations to the State Board, on an annual basis at a minimum.

Specific data considered and presented to the SWIB includes:

- employment projections, to include the identification of high-demand, high-growth employment,
- analysis of current workforce to identify skills gaps,
- detailed analysis/comparison of education and wage data for the current and projected workforce
- detailed analysis of employment projections at the local level for selected counties/urban areas.

2. *Describe the approach the State will use to disseminate accurate and timely workforce information to businesses, job seekers, and employment counselors, in easy to use formats that are readily accessible within One-Stop Career Centers and at remote locations such as libraries, schools, worksites, and at home.*

Montana's Research & Analysis Bureau offers user-friendly access to on-line and printed materials and resources, and also offers personal support to customers, including businesses, job seekers, employment counselors, and other professionals. The Research & Analysis website is maintained to provide timely workforce information, and also offers access to all of the printed materials offered by the Bureau. The website is available 24 hours a day. Additionally, if a user cannot find the information they are in search of, the website provides a link by which users can ask their specific question, to be answered by one of the Bureau's experts.

- 3 *Describe how the State's Workforce Information Core Products and Services Plan is aligned with the WIA State Plan to ensure that the investments in core products and services support the State's overall strategic direction for workforce investment.*

The Core Products and Services Plan was written with a focus on providing timely, relevant, and localized labor market information. The plan was developed using input from, and was approved by the State Workforce Investment Board. As part of the emphasis on providing useful data, the Research & Analysis Bureau routinely consults its customers (including government and the State Board) to determine current and projected needs for data, using tools such as the Bureau's customer service database, and the ongoing outreach and education efforts with local staff and officials.

Additionally, the State Plan will be consulted while writing the Workforce Information Core Products and Services grant plan to facilitate coordination with and approval by the State Workforce Investment Board.

- 4 *Describe how State workforce information products and tools are coordinated with the national electronic workforce information tools including America's Career Information Network and Career Voyages.*

A critical portion of the state's workforce information comes from the America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS) database, which the Research & Analysis Bureau is responsible for populating. The ALMIS database is used as the data source for many of the national electronic workforce information tools.

Additionally, the Research & Analysis Bureau uses a committee to manage aspects of its electronic delivery system, to include review and analysis of national electronic workforce information tools. This review/analysis identifies areas for greater coordination/complementation between state and national electronic delivery systems, and subsequently identifies action to affect the change.

C. *Adults and Dislocated Workers*

1. *Core Services. §112(b)(17)(a)(i).*
 - a. *Describe state strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core services as described in §134(d)(2).*
 - b. *Describe how the state will ensure the three-tiered service delivery strategy for labor exchange services for job seekers and employers authorized by the Wagner-Peyser Act includes: (1) self-service, (2) facilitated self-help service, and (3) staff-assisted service, and is accessible and available to all customers at the local level.*

- c. *Describe how the state will integrate resources provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and WIA Title I for adults and dislocated workers as well as resources provided by required One-Stop partner programs, to deliver core services.*

Montana integrates labor exchange activities with WIA Title I services by requiring at least one certified One-Stop Center in each local workforce area. Additional One-Stop locations are developed based on the needs of local communities and tribal nations, and as criteria are met, the One-Stops are certified. Montana's State Board had established a goal of implementing a minimum of ten certified One-Stops during the first two years of this strategic plan, and worked closely with local elected officials, businesses and communities to successfully meet this goal. Montana currently has eleven certified One-Stop Systems, and one is in the final stages of certification awaiting successful sight reviews. To date, four additional plans are under staff review.

Montana consistently ensures universal access to the minimum required core services as described in Section 134(d)(2) by providing options to customers for receipt of services. Services are offered: on-site; through electronic access; through remote service options that include electronic/computer access and telephone access; and by referrals for off-site partners including Carl Perkins, Public Assistance, Public Health services, Government and educational agencies and institutions including Job Corps, Refugee Assistance, community based organizations and economic development programs; Adult education and literacy programs, other Montana University System programs; and the National Farmworker Jobs program. Montanans can select from the services available through the many different options listed above. This ensures flexibility for participants and ensures they have access to services.

Montana ensures three-tiered services for labor exchange services for job seekers and employers are accessible and available to all customers at the local level by offering core services in the 3-tiered service delivery strategy in all 24 local Job Service Workforce Centers across the state.

2. *Intensive Services. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).) Describe State strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers who meet the criteria in §134(d)(3)(A) receive intensive services as defined.*

Montana's State Board ensures provision of employment and training activities as required under WIA. The statewide provision of intensive training services provides opportunity for informed choices about services that are available, allowing access to the full range of education, training, and employment services. The State provides guidance and technical assistance to local areas and One-Stops, and develops policy as necessary to clarify provisions of intensive and training services.

Montana's State Board and the State have policies requiring that workers who meet the criteria, receive intensive services as defined. The Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau monitors local service providers to ensure workers who meet the criteria receive intensive services according to the policies adopted by the local boards and the state.

3. *Training Services. (§112(b)(17)(A)(i).)*

- a. *Describe the Governor's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources.*

The Governor's overall vision for Montana's workforce system, as described in Section I, requires integration of services and collaboration of partners to streamline a demand-driven workforce investment system that maximizes services.

More effective partnerships can result in leveraging value-added resources, and the State Board is well positioned to act as the convener of industry, business, education, training entities, and employer associations, to best identify current and future skill needs of employers and industry. The acquired knowledge from these partnerships will allow the One-Stop system to coordinate and maximize services in the most seamless and cost-effective manner.

b. *Individual Training Accounts:*

i. *What policy direction has the State provided for ITAs?*

The State's direction for Individual Training Accounts is that ITAs must be used to purchase training programs that are directly linked to occupations that are in demand in the local area, or in another area to which an adult or dislocated worker is willing to relocate. Service providers may allow for training in occupations which may have high potential for sustained demand or growth in the local area. Participants must use the ITA to purchase training from a provider on the eligible training provider list.

ii. *Describe innovative training strategies used by the State to fill skills gaps. Include in the discussion the State's effort to broaden the scope and reach of ITAs through partnerships with business, education, economic development, and industry associations and how business and industry involvement is used to drive this strategy.*

In Montana the health care industry represents the largest overall service sector economy gross state product with health care wages averaging 21% higher than the overall average wage in Montana. However, the state is experiencing an unacceptable shortage of qualified health care workers. The federal government designated 50 of Montana's 56 counties as Health Professional Shortage Areas. The demand for health care services is increasing as the population is aging; in Montana the average age of the state's population is increasing even faster than the national average. At the same time the demand for health care is increasing, too few people are entering or remaining in the health care professions. Examples for using incentive funds includes:

- (a) Build an Infrastructure to establish Partnerships Between Employers, Workforce Agencies, Training Providers and Community-based Organizations;
- (b) Identify regional health care industry needs;

- (c) Utilize partners' services and expertise to educate service provider and education networks.

The SWIB Health Care Task Force (HCTF) was formalized in the spring of 2006. The purpose of the HCTF was to advise and recommend to the State Board best practices and innovative approaches regarding the reduction of health care worker shortages, and education and training opportunities. The HCTF was charged to: 1) Identify health care workforce shortages and the regions in which they exist; 2) Identify any causes of the shortages; 3) . Offer suggestion and recommendation that address the shortages. A report was presented to the SWIB's Executive Committee in December 2006 and submitted to the Governor for his consideration. The HCTF remains as an advisory body as the State Board begins its strategic planning for the next program year.

In addition, Montana's Governor is committed to expanding the alternative and renewable energy industry. Montana, a WIRED grant recipient (Montana's Agro-Energy Plan), is developing an industry cluster of bio-lubricants and bio-fuels. Agro-Energy is one of Montana's identified high-wage, high-growth industries. Large scale energy development will require innovative training strategies and training programs to fill new skills gaps as well as to meet the demand for an expanding workforce with existing skills.

- iii. *Discuss the State's plan for committing all or part of WIA Title I funds to training opportunities in high-growth, high-demand, and economically vital occupations.*

Montana's workforce investment system is a complement to its economic development efforts. The State Board recognizes the fact that labor training may be the single most important factor for stabilizing or enhancing a sustainable economic base. The State Board is exploring the potential to create a Customized Labor Training Program. Resources to support the program are as yet unidentified, however, the State is exploring all possibilities and combination of funding. It would be the intent of the program to assist existing Montana businesses in retentions, expansions, or assist new commercial ventures that have already committed to a Montana location in start-up activities. No workers shall be dislocated either in Montana or out of state as a result of these activities. The desired results of this effort would be to increase and diversify commercial activities in Montana, and thereby elevate the skill and wage levels of employees. Some customized training programs are currently offered by the Montana University System, often through the Colleges of Technology and the two-year colleges. Tribal Colleges may also provide some customized training. All of these efforts are intended to assist existing, new and expanding businesses.

- iv. *Describe the State's policy for limiting ITAs (e.g., dollar amount or duration)*

State policy does not set limits on ITAs.

- v. *Describe the State's current or planned use of WIA Title I funds for the provision of training through apprenticeship.*

The State is currently working to promote and increase the relationship between the workforce system and Apprenticeship and 2-year education to encourage curriculum development and training in Montana's high growth, high demand occupations. Resources available through apprenticeship programs are integrated into the local One-Stop systems by actively coordinating with those programs through representation on the State Board. Labor Organizations, businesses that are apprenticeship sponsors, and private industry associations with linkages to apprenticeship also serve on the State Board. An Apprenticeship Advisory Committee has been formed as a sub-committee of the State Board with a mission of partnering with business, labor and education to actively promote awareness of, and the benefits and successes of career opportunities in Registered Apprenticeship Occupations. In June 2006, the Apprenticeship Advisory Committee developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of all interested parties in structuring technical education programs that would allow for a seamless transition from a 2-year AAS degree to an existing registered apprenticeship. The intent of the MOU is to ensure that Montana will be prepared to meet the demand for a highly-skilled technical workforce now and into the future. The MOU was developed in open meetings to gain input from the public. Signatures to the MOU were as follows: SWIB Chair, SWIB Apprenticeship Advisory Committee Chair, Commissioner of the Office of Higher Education, Superintendent of the Office of Public Instruction, State Director to Workforce Development and 2-year Education, Commissioner of the State Department of Labor & Industry and the Apprenticeship & Training Director of the Department of Labor & Industry. To date, employer-driven advisory committees have utilized the MOU for Flathead Valley Community College and MSU-Northern to develop agreements for electrical and plumbing programs.

- vi. *Identify state policies developed in response to changes to WIA regulations that permit the use of WIA Title I financial assistance to employ or train participants in religious activities when the assistance is provided indirectly (such as through an ITA) (20 CFR § 667.266(b)(1).)*

The State is in the process of developing policy that will permit the use of WIA Title I funds to assist in the employment and training of participants via faith-based organizations. These organizations have always been permitted on the Eligible Training Provider List provided their applications met the criteria required of eligible training providers.

- c. *Eligible Training Provider List. Describe the State's process for providing broad customer access to the statewide list of eligible training providers and their performance information including at every One-Stop Career Center. (§112(b)(17)(A)(iii).)*

The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) is available through two sources. It is posted at www.mtjoblinc.mt.gov and is available to all customers via the Internet. A distribution list is also maintained and used to disseminate current ETPLs to all service providers of WIA Title 1B programs.

Montana currently has a waiver to exempt the State from providing performance data on these providers and is requesting a permanent waiver in the appropriate section of this plan.

The current waiver is in effect through June 30, 2007. Performance data for training providers will be incorporated into the interactive version of the ETPL when available.

d. *On-the-Job (OJT) and Customized Training (§§112(b)(17)(A)(i) and 134(b)). Based on the outline below, describe the State's major directions, policies and requirements related to OJT and customized training.*

vii. *Describe the Governor's vision for increasing training opportunities to individuals through the specific delivery vehicles of OJT and customized training.*

The State considers OJT and customized training as important training activities and opportunities for special populations where services are more appropriately provided through community-based organizations, labor organizations, trade associations, and employers. OJT and customized training opportunities should focus on developing skills for Montana's emerging industries in order to align with the Governor's overall goal and objective to facilitate the growth of Montana companies, increase wages for trained workers, increase employee productivity, and to assist in the skill development of employees in Montana.

viii. *Describe how the State:*

- *Identifies OJT and customized training opportunities;*
- *Markets OJT and customized training as an incentive to untapped employer pools including new business to the State, employer groups;*
- *Partners with high-growth, high-demand industries and economically vital industries to develop potential OJT and customized training strategies;*
- *Taps business partners to help drive the demand-driven strategy through joint planning, competency and curriculum development; and determining appropriate lengths of training, and*
- *Leverages other resources through education, economic development and industry associations to support OJT and customized training ventures.*

The State Board, assuming the roles and responsibilities of local boards, provides guidance to local area service providers, through its administrative entity, as needed, on the various aspects of OJT and customized training.

4. *Service to Specific Populations. (§112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)*

a. *Describe the State's strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the State's One-Stop delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers,*

low-income individuals such as migrants and seasonal farmworkers, women, minorities, individuals training for non-traditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, people with limited English-speaking proficiency, and people with disabilities.)

The State Board and its effective local One-Stop delivery system are key to ensuring business and industry have access to a skilled and prepared workforce. They assist participants in identifying and preparing for occupations that are in demand, in industries that are critical to Montana's economy. The State Board will collaborate to pursue new strategies to improve access and services to those with significant barriers to employment and/or self-sufficiency.

In addition, the State Board will work to: Develop and provide guidance to local area service providers on prioritizing services in the One-Stop System; explore capacity building efforts at the State and local levels and recommend ways to increase investments in building the capacity of One-Stop staff in providing services to special populations such as persons with disabilities, at risk youth, and ex-offenders; and developing guidance for balancing the investment of shrinking resources into business, supportive, and training services.

- b. Describe the reemployment services you will provide to unemployment insurance claimants and the Worker Profiling services provided to claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their unemployment insurance benefits in accordance with section 3(c)(3) of the Wagner-Peyser Act.*

In PY 2004, Montana was selected as a Personal Reemployment Account (PRA) Demonstration State. As a result, our RES funding was turned into WIA PRA dollars, and Montana has not operated a dedicated RES program.

As Reemployment Services funding is reinstated in Montana, our State is committed to assigning staff positions in targeted offices, dedicated to providing intensive orientation and assessment to profiled and other UI claimants to determine services needed to enter employment or be enrolled in training.

Job search assistance and job club services will be offered to assist the customer in their work search efforts. Staff will work with claimants to increase the number of employer contacts, verify employer contacts and expand the UI claimant's job search to include secondary occupations and increase the geographic area of their job search. Strategies for staff will also include pursuing intensive job development for those claimants that are considered most job ready. Additionally, if UI claimants are determined to need training, training opportunities will be provided in coordination with the WIA Dislocated Worker Program, as funding is available.

- c. Describe how the State administers the unemployment insurance work test and how feedback requirements (under §7(a)(3)(F) of the Wagner-Peyser Act) for all UI claimants are met.*

Currently, Montana's Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division within the Department of Labor and Industry cross matches UI data with the employment services system to conduct the unemployment insurance work test.

Montana's new computer system for Wagner-Peyser activities, MontanaWorks, and the Unemployment Insurance computer system, MISTICS, now have a common data base and are being programmed to perform the work test.

- d. Describe the State's strategy for integrating and aligning services to dislocated workers provided through the WIA rapid response, WIA dislocated worker, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs. Does the State have a policy supporting co-enrollment for WIA and TAA?*

Montana's Rapid Response program and the TAA program are operated by the State Job Service Workforce Centers. Project Challenge: Work Again of the AFL-CIO operates the WIA Dislocated Worker program. Staff from the Job Service Workforce Centers coordinates all of the Rapid Response activities and help the employer or worker file TAA petitions. Partners at the local level are included in the Rapid Response Workshops. In this way, the services provided to workers are coordinated and the leverage of funds between the WIA and TAA programs is maximized.

The Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau has a policy to support co- and dual-enrollment for WIA and TAA. Montana successfully operates National Emergency Grants in such a way that WIA and TAA funds are coordinated to support workers, and will continue this practice.

- e. How is the State's workforce investment system working collaboratively with business and industry and the education community to develop strategies to overcome barriers to skill achievement and employment experienced by the populations listed in paragraph (a.) above and to ensure they are being identified as a critical pipeline of workers?*

Montana has been transforming into a demand-driven system that is responsive to individual employers and industries, and has been very effective working with 2-year education to provide timely skills training for both new and expanding businesses. We are further developing the demand-driven system which will develop strong collaboration with business and industry and the education community to further build on this strategy.

- f. Describe how the State will ensure that the full array of One-Stop services are available to individuals with disabilities and that the services are fully accessible?*

The State Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is part of the State Agency Management (SAM) Team for Workforce Development. One purpose of this group is to organize and coordinate services throughout the one stop system. The State plans to expand disability services by providing information, and when possible, co-locating staff at all one-stops in Montana.

Currently, Vocational Rehabilitation has contributed significantly to services in Billings and Butte and continues to be a valued one-stop partner in these operations.

Montana has applied for a Disability Program “Navigator” grant (DPN). DPN helps people with disabilities “navigate” through the enormous challenges of seeking work. The initiative is developing new/ongoing partnerships to achieve seamless, comprehensive, and integrated access to services, creating systemic change, and expanding the workforce development system’s capacity to serve customers with disabilities and employers. (Montana received notification of grant award April 26, 2007.)

g. Describe the role LVER/DVOP staff have in the One-Stop Delivery System? How will the State ensure adherence to the legislative requirements for veterans’ staff? How will services under this Plan take into consideration the agreement reached between the Secretary and the State regarding veterans’ employment programs? (§§112(b)(7), 112 (b)(17)(B); 322, 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41; and 20 CFR §1001.120).)

The role of the LVER/DVOP staff in the One-Stop Delivery System is to provide our veteran clients the services that they need to obtain maximum employment. The LVER/DVOP staff members also educate our partners in the one-stop delivery system on the requirements for providing priority of service to any veteran client in the system.

Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 11-03 details the activities that LVER/DVOP staff members are to perform. The methods that Montana uses to ensure that the legislative requirements are fulfilled include some of the following. One method is to systematically monitor the local offices that have veteran representatives to ensure that all applicable laws, regulations and directives are being followed. Both state and federal staff participate in this monitoring. Another is to inform and train our veteran representatives and local office staff and management on all the current regulations and applicable Veteran Program Letters so that everyone has a clear understanding of what is required of the veteran representative positions.

The Secretary of Labor has issued guidance to all grantees of US Department of Labor funds that veterans are to receive priority of service in all programs funded by the department. Montana will follow that directive.

h. Department of Labor regulations at 29 CFR 37, require all recipients of Federal financial assistance from DOL to provide meaningful access to limited English proficient (LEP) persons. Federal financial assistance includes grants, training, equipment usage, donations of surplus property, and other assistance. Sub-recipients are also covered when Federal DOL funds are passed through from one recipient to a sub-recipient. Describe how the State will ensure access to services through the State’s One-Stop delivery system by persons with limited English proficiency and how the State will meet the requirements of ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 26-02, (May 29, 2003) which provides guidance on methods of complying with the Federal rule.

Montana's Local Areas are subject to both Federal and State requirements regarding nondiscrimination and equal opportunity, which includes equal access to persons with limited English proficiency.

A preliminary assessment of the workforce system, utilizing 2000 census data, was conducted using the four factors of number of proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served; frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program; nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided by the program; and resources available. Initially the State determined that services to individuals with limited English proficiency in the workforce system currently meets requirements, however the State is in the process of developing LEP statewide policy that will include a checklist for developing a Limited English Proficiency Plan for communities to use.

Currently, Bilingual services are provided in the Community Management Teams located across the State. Bilingual interpretive services are provided by private individuals that speak multiple languages living in many areas across the state, the Montana University System and the Montana United Indian Association with sites located in various Community Management Teams and the One-Stop centers. Montana One-Stop Certification requires that sites be accessible for those with disabilities and services be available for those who speak languages other than English. During on-site reviews, these accommodations are verified. Other examples of language access tools include: *I Speak Cards* and language access lines such as *Language Line*, and website such as LEP.gov are available through the internet.

- i. *Describe the State's strategies to enhance and integrate service delivery through the One-Stop delivery system for migrant and seasonal farm workers and agricultural employers. How will the State ensure that migrant and seasonal farm workers have equal access to employment opportunities through the State's One-Stop delivery system? Include the number of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) the State anticipates reaching annually through outreach to increase their ability to access core, intensive, and training services in the One-Stop Career Center System.*

All Wagner Peyser services are provided through the One-Stop System, which includes mainstream and outreach services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW). Many National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees have forged strong partnerships with local One-Stop delivery systems to ensure access to services.

During the average 2-month migrant farmworker season, Montana employs additional staff to conduct out-reach and promote the services available to the workers. In addition, for the past ten years in Lake County, service providers from the Office of Public Assistance, Migrant Health, Migrant Education, Rural Employment Opportunities, the Local Job Service Workforce Center, and Migrant Legal Services have coordinated and established a virtual One-Stop for migrant workers during the annual cherry harvest season. On site services are coordinated and provided for all legal Migrant and Seasonal workers who request and qualify for services. This collaborative effort may serve as a model for best practices to be incorporated in other local areas across Montana.

The State Board will work to promote the integration of service delivery for migrant and seasonal farmworkers by working with system partners to determine the needs of the agriculture industry in Montana's rural economy. The goal will be to publish a report that provides information, technical assistance, and best practices regarding how the One-Stop system can develop and maintain a broad range of services that are accessible and address the needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Rural Employment Services are available at all One-Stop centers. The Flathead and eastern regions of Montana have higher percentages of seasonal and migrant populations.

Montana anticipates reaching 150 Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers annually through outreach to increase their ability to access core, intensive, and training services in the One-Stop Career Center System.

5. *Priority of Service*

- a. *What procedures and criteria are in place under 20 CFR 663.600 for the Governor and appropriate local boards to direct One-Stop operators to give priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income individuals for intensive and training services if funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are determined to be limited? (§§112(b)(17)(A)(iv) and 134(d)(4)(E).)*

In the event that the funds allocated to local areas for adult employment and training activities are limited, priority shall be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals for intensive and training services. State policy provides that services would also be provided to special participant populations who are at or below a level of self-sufficiency, or have one of the following barriers: (1) older workers; (2) individuals with language barriers; (3) individuals facing cultural barriers, including American Indians; (4) individuals not receiving services from other programs in WIA. The State Workforce Investment Board delegated identification of other targeted populations to the local boards and community management teams. Self-sufficiency for this purpose is defined for adults as: meeting basic expenses without subsidies; functioning independently from federal or state assistance; having reasonable access to affordable health care; and earning a wage of at least \$9.90 per hour for an individual. Self-sufficiency for dislocated workers will be 90% of the layoff wage or wages equaling the adult self-sufficiency level, whichever is higher.

- b. *What policies and strategies does the State have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288)(38 USC 4215), that priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, in accordance with the provisions of TEGL 5-03 (9/16/03/)?*

The State understands that although the Jobs for Veterans priority requirements, as they apply to Workforce Investment Act Title IB adult, youth and dislocated worker (both formula-funded and Rapid Response activities) programs, is a statutory mandate it is not intended to displace the core function of these WIA programs. Additionally, veterans seeking services must qualify as eligible through WIA Title IB and/or Title III programs.

In reference to WIA Title IB adult, youth and dislocated worker programs (both formula-funded and Rapid Response activities) the veterans' preference will be applied as follows:

- ♦ An individual meeting both the veterans' and the mandatory priorities or spending requirement or limitation would obtain the highest preference for the program.
- ♦ Non-veterans within the program's mandatory priority would receive a preference over eligible veterans outside the program-specific mandatory priority or spending requirement or limitation.
- ♦ Eligible veterans outside the program-specific mandatory priority or spending requirement or limitation would receive priority over non-veterans outside the priority or spending requirement or limitation (once the spending requirement or limitation is met.)

In addition to providing assurance that it will comply with the Secretary's Agreement in regard to Service to Veterans, Montana agrees to comply with requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act and apply the priority of service for veterans (and in some cases spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for participation in Wagner-Peyser funded programs.

D. Rapid Response. (112(b)(17)(A)(ii).) Describe how your State provides Rapid Response services with the funds reserved under section 133(a)(2).

- 1. Identify the entity responsible for providing Rapid Response services. Describe how Rapid Response activities involve local boards and Chief Elected Officials. If Rapid Response activities are shared between the State and local areas, describe the functions of each and how funds are allocated to the local areas.*

The entity responsible for providing Rapid Response services is the State Job Service Operations Bureau with 24 State Job Service Workforce Centers across the State providing the service. All Rapid Response funds are allocated to the State Job Service Workforce Centers.

The Bureau Chief for the State Job Service Operations Bureau is part of the planning process for service delivery of Rapid Response activities. In addition, the WIA dislocated worker service provider, Project Challenge: Work Again, is included in the planning and coordination of Rapid Response activities in Montana.

- 2. Describe the process involved in carrying out Rapid Response activities.*
 - a. What methods are involved in receiving notice of impending layoffs (include WARN Act notice as well as other sources)?*

The Local Job Service Workforce Center staff provides an Initial Screening Contact (ISC) to the Rapid Response Unit located in the Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau as soon as a layoff has occurred or they are informed of a pending layoff. This information is passed onto the State Workforce Investment Board's administrative entity and the local service providers

Any WARN Act notice comes to the Rapid Response Unit at the Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau and is passed onto the State Workforce Investment Board's administrative entity and the local service providers as necessary.

- b. *What efforts does the Rapid Response team make to ensure that rapid response services are provided, whenever possible, prior to layoff date, onsite at the company, and on company time?*

The Rapid Response teams located in the Job Service Workforce Centers are in direct contact with the employer to the extent possible, when they are informed of a layoff. The team explains the benefits of providing Rapid Response information to the workers prior to the actual layoff date, and that providing the information at the company, and on company time, ensures the maximum numbers of workers are given information. The Job Service Workforce Centers also have staff dedicated to working directly with employers in local communities. The Rapid Response staff work with Job Service Business Advocates to build employer relationships in the communities so that when a layoff occurs, the relationship is already in place.

- c. *What services are included in Rapid Response activities? Does the Rapid Response team provide workshops or other activities in addition to general informational services to affected workers? How do you determine what services will be provided for a particular layoff (including layoffs that may be trade-affected)?*

Services included in Rapid Response activities include:

- On-site contact with the employer, representatives of the affected workers, and the local community.
- Information and access to unemployment compensation benefits, comprehensive one-stop system services, and employment and training activities, including information on the Trade Adjustment Assistance program.
- Guidance and/or financial assistance in establishing a labor-management committee voluntarily agreed to by labor and management, or a workforce transition committee comprised of representatives of the employer, the affected workers and the local community. The committee may devise and oversee an implementation strategy that responds to the reemployment needs of the workers.
- Emergency assistance adapted to the particular closing, layoff or disaster.
- Assistance to the local board and chief elected officials to develop a coordinated response to the dislocation event and, as needed, obtain access to State economic development assistance. Such coordinated response may include the development of an application for a National Emergency Grant.

During a Rapid Response workshop, a survey of the workers is completed. The survey addresses basic questions to include education level, skills of the workers, how long they have worked for the employer, and what options the workers would consider for education and skills training. It also identifies issues or concerns the workers have, and other areas where the workers need additional information. Based on survey results, additional workshops are scheduled as necessary to address the needs of the workers.

3. *How does the State ensure a seamless transition between Rapid Response services and One-Stop activities for affected workers?*

The One-Stop system is actively involved in any Rapid Response activity that is held in communities. At the Rapid Response Workshop, Wagner-Peyser, WIA, Vocational

Rehabilitation, and other One-Stop partners are present to give information to all of the workers including where to find services. A One-Stop application is completed at the time of the Rapid Response Workshop so all of the various partners have the applicant information.

4. *Describe how Rapid Response functions as a business service? Include whether Rapid Response partners with economic development agencies to connect employees from companies undergoing layoffs to similar companies that are growing and need skilled workers? How does Rapid Response promote the full range of services available to help companies in all stages of the economic cycle, not just those available during layoffs? How does the State promote Rapid Response as a positive, proactive, business-friendly service, not only a negative, reactive service?*

Rapid Response works very closely with the Job Service Employer's Council and the Business Advocates in the Job Service Workforce Centers. Rapid Response staff and Business Advocates consistently work with employers in communities to explain how early intervention with workers when a layoff may occur, is beneficial to the employer as well as the worker. The Business Advocates work directly with the local economic development agencies to identify employer needs in the communities and this information is shared with Rapid Response. Rapid Response through the partnership with Business Advocates, assures that the full range of services are available to help companies and are able to promote Rapid Response as a positive, proactive business service.

5. *What other partnerships does Rapid Response engage in to expand the range and quality of services available to companies and affected workers and to develop an effective early lay-off warning network?*

Rapid Response engages in partnerships with Unemployment Insurance, WIA, Trade Act programs, TANF, Children's Health Insurance Plan, economic development, Consumer Credit Counseling and Wagner-Peyser. Often a lay-off is reported to the Job Service Workforce Center by the employer or by the worker, but it is also reported to other partners. The coordination and cooperation of partners ensures that information is provided to the Rapid Response Unit to be distributed to all the partners.

6. *What systems does the Rapid Response team use to track its activities? Does the State have a comprehensive, integrated Management Information System that includes Rapid Response, Trade Act programs, National Emergency Grants, and One-Stop activities?*

Rapid Response uses MontanaWorks, formally known as (MTMIS) to track activities. Previously, Trade Act programs were not tracked and integrated into the system, however with the implementation of MontanaWorks, this has become a reality. MontanaWorks is now fully operational, with all of the WIA, Trade Act and Wagner-Peyser programs, and National Emergency Grants being tracked in one system.

7. *Are Rapid Response funds used for other activities not described above; e.g., the provision of additional assistance to local areas that experience increased workers or unemployed individuals due to dislocation events?*

Montana uses a portion of Rapid Response funds to supplement participant services, due to the reduction in the formula dislocated worker funds. This has been done in an effort to maintain the delivery of services in the dislocated worker program.

E. *Youth. ETA's strategic vision identifies youth most in need, such as out of school youth (and those at risk), youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and migrant and seasonal farmworker youth as those most in need of service. State programs and services should take a comprehensive approach to serving these youth, including basic skills remediation, helping youth stay in or return to school, employment, internships, help with attaining a high school diploma or GED, post-secondary vocational training, apprenticeships and enrollment in community and four-year colleges. (§112(b)(18).)*

1. *Describe your State's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need as described above. Include any State requirements and activities to assist youth who have special needs or barriers to employment, including those who are pregnant, parenting, or have disabilities. Include how the State will coordinate across State agencies responsible for workforce investment, foster care, education, human services, juvenile justice, and other relevant resources as part of the strategy. (§112(b)(18).)*

The State Board sees opportunities to offer leadership, coordination and support for youth activities and strongly believes that coordination in the delivery of services with complementary federal and state programs will assure quality services to youth and reduce duplication of efforts.

Comprehensive, integrated services are provided statewide to eligible youth through the one-stop workforce system. The Youth Council is a partner and advisor to the State Workforce Investment Board in their effort to build the policies and systems for a more streamlined, effective service delivery system for all youth. Providers of youth programs, including the K-12 Education system, continue to enhance and expand their services to youth building on strategies such as:

- Basic skills remediation; tutoring, study skills training leading to completion of a secondary education;
- Alternative secondary school services;
- Social skills such as diversity training, interpersonal/thinking skills/ accepting responsibility; family intervention, and living alone, living with parents or others;
- Work maturity including age appropriate instruction, motivation, attitude, leadership, developing attention, individual focus, work habits, and time management;
- Transitional skills;
- Life skills such as budgeting, nutrition, individual counseling, career and life planning, drug and alcohol awareness;
- Summer employment opportunities linked to occupational and academic advancement;
- Paid and unpaid work experience including internships and job shadowing;
- Occupational skills training;
- Supportive services;

- Adult mentoring;
- Following-up services; Comprehensive guidance and counseling; and
- Broad understanding of educational and training opportunities and the means to fund them.
- Leadership Development activities that encourage responsibility and other positive social behavior.

All eligible youth, including those with special needs and/or barriers to continued education and employment receive comprehensive services through the efforts of the SWIB's Youth Council and youth service providers. The Youth Council members are advocates for youth and members represent a broad range of experience and expertise in youth issues. Providers of WIA Title IB youth services conduct outreach throughout their respective districts and coordinate with other youth agencies to ensure youth have access to all services available to them in their communities.

Memorandums of Understanding between State Workforce Investment Board, Human Resource agencies, Job Corps and Employment Service agencies in the one-stop system are one avenue that the State uses in assuring that special programs and services to youth are provided.

- Youth will be introduced to labor market information, resources, services, and other information necessary to realize their goal;
- all ten WIA required elements will be made available to youth participants through providers of youth services and other partners in the One Stop systems;
- programs will be designed to offer assistance to youth in decision-making, academic, communication and study skills;
- youth will be advised of the most appropriate types of higher education institutions to meet their plans.

2. *Describe how coordination with Job Corps and other youth programs will occur. (§112(b)(18)(C).)*

There are three Job Corps centers in Montana and staff from the Job Corps have been very active in the development of Montana's Workforce System and have provided representation on nearly all of the Community Management Teams (CMT). Job Corps representatives have proactively shared information about their program through a variety of venues, including presentations to CMTs, the State Workforce Investment Board, and at the bi-annual Technical Assistance WIA Conferences. Job Corps has a representative on the State Board, SWIB Youth Council, Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision, as well as an active presence within the One-Stop system.

Additional opportunities for collaboration will occur through the process of identifying potential partners in the state to connect with and the benefits of making those connections. This approach will provide a fresh avenue for bringing about coordination with youth agencies that are not the traditional programs. Additionally, a very early mapping and gap analysis conducted by the team at the youth forum indicates the potential for partnerships with agencies not currently familiar with the workforce development system.

Further coordination and partnering regarding issues involving youth-at-risk is attained through the membership on numerous councils and boards including:

- Interagency Coordinating Council for State Prevention Programs, The Commissioner of Labor and Industry sits on this Council along with representatives from the Department of Public Health and Human Services which is the agency responsible for foster care issues, the Department of Justice and Corrections, the Montana Children's Trust Fund, and the Montana Board of Crime Control. The Interagency Coordinating Council for State Prevention programs goals include reducing child abuse and neglect by promoting child safety and healthy family functioning; and increasing the percentage of Montana high schools students who successfully transition from school to work post-secondary education, training and/or the military.
- Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision whose current membership includes: Foster care, staff in DPHHS, DLI'S WIA Youth Coordinator, Manager of the Violent Youth Offender Prevention Program in the Department of Corrections, Staff in the Department of Justice, Board of Crime Control; Job Corp; and Adult Family Literacy Act staff in the Office of Public Instruction. The Team plans to expand the membership-p to include at-risk Native American and Migrant Seasonal Farmworker youth.
- The Montana Legislature established a Youth Justice Advisory Council and made them responsible for promoting juvenile justice coordination and performance. The Youth Justice Advisory Council recommends geographic areas where additional and supplemental juvenile programs are needed to the State Workforce Investment Board and its Youth Council.
- Jobs for Montana's Graduates (JMG) won a national award in the summer of 2006 for their success in keeping at-risk Montana students in school while also preparing them with work readiness skills, job placement services, and career counseling opportunities. JMG funds are provided at the state level and then allocated to local school districts, which commit to operating JMG in their high schools.

Other strategies to consider include:

- Extending length of services to youth, especially out of school, including the one year retention services as appropriate;
- Expanding associate provider services to middle (or junior high) schools, senior high schools, and alternative schools to assure that students have access to information necessary to make career decisions;
- Targeting additional services and resources to at-risk youth and/or coordination with other services which may benefit them;
- Developing effective partnerships to create a greater connection between and among all youth programs and initiatives to eliminate duplication of services and provide more efficient services to youth.

3. *How does the State plan to utilize the funds reserved for Statewide activities to support the State's vision for serving youth? Examples of activities that would be appropriate investments of these funds include:*

- utilizing the funds to promote cross agency collaboration;*
- demonstration of cross-cutting models of service delivery;*
- development of new models of alternative education leading to employment; or*

- d. *development of demand-driven models with business and industry working collaboratively with the workforce investment system and education partners to develop strategies for bringing these youth successfully into the workforce pipeline with the right skills.*

The Montana Team for a Shared Youth Vision is currently in the planning stages of promoting the shared vision for serving youth and funding discussions have not taken place.

Montana has an excellent best practice of successful use of funds reserved for Statewide youth activity funds that could be used as a guide to designing future activities.

There is also great potential for utilizing funds to promote cross agency collaboration including conducting a statewide regional youth forum where youth leaders such as those in the WIA system, foster care, juvenile justice, and migrant seasonal Farmworker youth programs would work on a plan for collaboration. The plan could include activities such as conferences, forums and trainings that focus on several aspects of workforce development such as work-related education and training for high school youth and post-secondary youth to build job readiness skills and promote higher education. The planning process would be an opportune time for developing measurable outcomes, and building new partnerships, as well as strengthening current partnerships and sharing resources.

- e. *Describe how your State will, in general, meet the Act's provisions regarding youth program design. (§§112(b)(18) and 129(c).)*

The State Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council play significant roles in developing and promoting Montana's programs and services for youth. Youth programs have been enhanced and expanded over the previous five year period to broaden the opportunity for young people to develop the knowledge and behavior skills necessary to enter and succeed in skilled and marketable high-paid careers.

The following ten program elements are made available to all youth: 1) Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to secondary school offerings; 2) Alternative secondary school offerings; 3) Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning; 4) Paid and unpaid work experience, including internships and job shadowing; 5) Occupational skill training; 6) Leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work, and other activities; 7) Supportive services; 8) Adult mentoring that may occur both during and after program participation; 9) Follow-up services; and 10) Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, and counseling as appropriate to the needs of individual youth.

Montana's youth program design includes:

- Providing appropriate services based on age and individual youth needs;
- Preparing youth for success in employment through work-based experience;
- Improving educational achievement;
- Ensuring adequate support for youth in meeting their career goals; supportive services, adult mentoring, follow up, and comprehensive career guidance and counseling; and

- Encouraging leadership development, which includes positive social and soft skills training.

Comprehensive services are provided to eligible youth, including those with special needs and/or barriers to continued education and employment. The Youth Council also represent a broad range of experience and expertise in youth issues.

Memorandums of Understanding between State Workforce Investment Board, Human Resource agencies, Job Corps and Employment Service agencies in the one-stop system are one avenue that the State uses to assure that special programs and services to youth are provided, including academic, communication and study skills.

The State Workforce Investment Board and the Youth Council will ensure that workforce investment youth activities complement and reinforce academic and occupational curriculum. Through classroom learning and workplace learning experiences students will gain knowledge about the world of work, career options and how to make informed career decisions.

- All youth will be assessed for educational and occupational needs. Assessment results will be used to develop individual training plans and/or career plans tailored to the skills, learning styles, and interests of each participant.
- Youth will be introduced to labor market information, resources, services, and other information necessary to realize their goal;
- All ten required elements will be provided through providers of youth services and other organizations involved in the Local Workforce Investment Area One-Stop systems;
- Programs will be designed to offer assistance to youth in decision-making, academic, communication and study skills;
- Youth will be advised of the most appropriate types of higher education institutions to meet their plans;

Youth will be provided with supportive services that may include transportation, child and/or dependent care, medical services and access to appropriate work attire and work tools, technology or other reasonable accommodations within the workplace.

A minimum of 30% of Workforce Investment Act youth funds will be used for youth activities for out-of-school youth. Those out-of-school youth will be enrolled in services tailored to meet their needs. Youth providers will raise the literacy, social, and/or technical skills of the youth so they will successfully get and retain jobs and find career pathways to greater responsibility and higher wages.

WIA performance monitoring mandates that training dollars are spent in educational systems that successfully prepare workers. Leaders from the K-12 and the post-secondary educational systems are full participants on the State Workforce Investment Boards and Youth Council and have committed to the successful implementation of the Workforce Investment Act. The Office of Public Instruction and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education have agreed to enter into a Statewide Memorandum of Understanding with other State agencies outlining the various methods of coordinating and collaborating

they intend to pursue. Special attention will be given to eliminating duplication of services and testing.

F. *Business Services. (§§112 (a) and 112(b)(2).) Provide a description of the state's strategies to improve the services to employers, including a description of how the State intends to:*

1. *Determine the employer needs in the local areas and on a Statewide basis.*
2. *Integrate business services, including Wagner-Peyser Act services, to employers through the One-Stop system.*
3. *Streamline administration of Federal tax credit programs within the One-Stop system to maximize employer participation? (20 CFR part 652.3(b), §112(b)(17)(A)(i).)*

Montana will improve services to employers and business customers through a variety of strategies, implemented at a variety of levels that will result in a customer-focused, demand-driven, well-integrated One-Stop system.

Specific strategies include:

- Determine employer needs at the statewide level through the gathering and reporting of workforce and labor market statistical and customer satisfaction information. Interaction with business/employer organizations such as the State Chamber of Commerce, Montana Economic Developers Association, Montana State Employers' Council – to name a few – will provide another vehicle for determining employer needs at a statewide level.
- Determine employer needs at the local level through both formal and informal methods of soliciting customer feedback and advice. Active participation with local business/employer organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, local economic development entities and the local Job Service Employers Committee coupled with one-on-one interaction through service delivery to employers will help local One-Stop partners be responsive to the needs of their business customers. Formal methods of determining employer needs may include customer surveys and focus groups.
- Integration of business services, including Wagner-Peyser Act services, to employers will occur at both the state and local levels. State agencies that play a role in Montana's workforce development system will maintain regular communication and collaboration on the development and delivery of business services through the State Agency Management (SAM) Team for Workforce Development. The Team is comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, the Departments of Labor and Industry that include representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison, Commerce, Public Health and Human Services including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Public Instruction, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least once a month to identify and discuss issues of mutual interest, and improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services. This also promotes the merits of integration of workforce development programs administered by state agencies. At the local community level, Wagner-Peyser Act services for business customers will be provided through the statewide network of 24 local Job Service Workforce Centers all of which are partners in Montana's One-Stop system. In those instances where it is feasible, Wagner-Peyser staff

will be co-located with other partners. In other situations, the services will be provided as an affiliated partner or under contract with the certified One-Stop operator.

- Develop the implementation of a “One-Stop Business Center” model in communities throughout the state. Montana will build upon existing best practices models, such as the Flathead Regional Business Center in Kalispell, to replicate in whole or part in other communities. The Flathead model brings together eleven different business services providers (including Wagner-Peyser staff, public and private sector economic development entities and 2-year higher education) through a combination of co-location and regular collaboration and networking.
- It is the vision of the State, utilizing the Executive Pulse Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program, to build a dynamic business retention plan that is inclusive of economic, workforce, and community development. The BEAR program established a database for business trends in Montana. To pave the way for BEAR to be accessible across the state, the Governor’s Office of Economic Development recently purchased access to the BEAR software for the entire state. The Montana Economic Development Association (MEDA) office is administering and coordinating the program for the Department of Commerce and the Governor’s Office of Economic Development. Montana has identified 12 Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs) for the purpose of regional economic growth and regional coordination. To date, the BEAR program has been implemented in communities within nine regions, and is in the discussion and planning phases in several communities throughout all regions.
- The State will continue to seek ways to maximize employers’ participation in the various Federal tax credit programs and streamline the administration of those programs. Outreach strategies to promote tax credit programs will include: 1) direct mail opportunities in collaboration with entities such as the Department of Revenue and Unemployment Insurance Contributions Bureau, 2) presentations at all Assistance to Business Clinics across the state and, 3) presentations to community and business organizations and gatherings. All of these strategies are currently being used for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and Welfare-to-Work Federal tax credit programs that are administered through the Workforce Services Division of the Montana Department of Labor & Industry.

G. Innovative Service Delivery Strategies (§112(b)(17)(A).)

1. *Describe innovative service delivery strategies the State has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet other key State goals. Include in the description the initiative’s general design, anticipated outcomes, partners involved and funds leveraged (e.g., Title I formula, Statewide reserve, employer contributions, education funds, non-WIA State funds).*

Members of the Governor’s cabinet continue to endorse a State Agency Management Team for Workforce Development comprised of lead agency officials from the Governor’s Office of Economic Opportunity, the Departments of Labor and Industry that include representatives from workforce programs and the WIA liaison, Commerce, Public Health and Human Services including TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Public Instruction, Office of the

Commissioner of Higher Education, and State Board staff. Team meetings are scheduled at least once a month to identify and discuss issues of mutual interest, and improve cooperation and collaboration among departments and services. This initiative also will assist the various programs with leveraging and pooling resources to maximize service delivery.

2. *If your State is participating in the ETA Personal Re-employment Account (PRA) demonstration, describe your vision for integrating PRAs as a service delivery alternative as part of the State's overall strategy for workforce investment.*

In PY 2004, Montana was selected as a Personal Reemployment Account (PRA) Demonstration State. Montana's grant runs from February 7, 2005 through February 7, 2008. As one of the seven demonstration states for the Personal Reemployment Accounts (PRAs), Montana is looking forward to sharing the rural perspective in the proposed model of delivering PRAs. Our vision is that by giving the claimant a greater role in determining their needs, and having the ability to purchase services and products that may not have been available through typical WIA programs, they will be able to find sustainable employment and return to the workforce in less time. The bonus incentive is a unique facet of this demonstration, and Montana is optimistic this will give claimants the initiative to find employment early in their claim and take advantage of the bonus, and then maintain employment in order to claim the second part of the bonus. Our desired outcome is that claimants, having the knowledge, ability, work ethic and soft-skills, will obtain sustainable employment through a self-directed job search, utilizing the PRA funding. To date, current data shows that a total of 147 PRAs were offered between February 7, 2005 and the present time. PRA participants have expended a total of \$28,907 in training, \$161,693 in supportive services, \$18,126 has been paid out in employment bonuses for those participants retaining full-time employment prior to the 13th week of their unemployment insurance claim, an additional \$3,357 has been paid for those participants who have retained that employment in excess of six months, for a total of \$212,083 in expenditures.

- H. *Strategies for Faith-based and Community Organizations (§112(b)(17)(i).) Enhancing outreach opportunities to those most in need is a fundamental element of the demand-driven systems goal to increase the pipeline of needed workers while meeting the training and employment needs of those most at risk. Faith-based and community organizations provide unique opportunities for the workforce investment system to access this pool of workers and meet the needs of business and industry. Describe those activities to be undertaken to: (1) increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the One-Stop delivery system; and (2) expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' clients and customers to the services offered by the One-Stops in the State. Outline those action steps designed to strengthen State collaboration efforts with local workforce investment areas in conducting outreach campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce investment system. Indicate how these resources can be strategically and effectively leveraged in the State's workforce investment areas to help meet the objectives of the Workforce Investment Act.*

Montana's Governor and State Board recognize that the integration of faith-based and community-based organizations with the local One-Stop system is crucial to serving individuals with multiple barriers, and that the development of partnerships with these organizations is vital to ensuring job

opportunities and the achievement of self-sufficiency. Partnering with these organizations may result in the leveraging of significant funding through grant application opportunities available only to community and faith-based organizations. Community-based organization representatives are active members of the State Board, thereby providing key insight to the development and promotion of their role in the system.

Montana has made a strong effort to provide services and training not traditionally served by the mainstream workforce system. This effort has included the expansion of partnerships and accessibility of services between many faith-based and community-based organizations with the local One-Stop systems. Examples of faith-based partnerships include:

- The Inter Faith Hospitality Network, a group providing housing for families in transition supported by local area churches, and are a member of the South Central JobLINC CMT; and
- South Central JobLINC One-Stop System has a Employment Consultant at St. Vincent DePaul 2 hours per week, and are also working with the Hispanic Ministries of the United Methodist Church in Yellowstone County on a Job Fair.

Montana, through the State Board and Youth Council, will focus on collaborating with faith and community based organizations in order to serve our youth who are most-at-risk. We are committed to educating parents and communities on the importance of promoting positive youth development, and informing parents and communities of strong and successful prevention and intervention programs that work by highlighting the efforts of coaches, pastors, and mentors from around the country.

In February 2006, Montana was accepted to participate in the USDOL sponsored SHARE Network Initiative, which would provide its workforce system with a long-overdue statewide, web-based community resource system. Initial assessment and planning meetings took place. DLI and SWIB staff identified and coordinated with CMTs to form an implementation team, with training planned for late April 2006. It was at this time, DLI and SWIB staff learned about the 2-1-1 System, a telephone-based information and referral service providing linkages to human service community resources. Although not partnered with the workforce system, a potential for duplication was identified. DLI and SWIB staff determined SHARE Network activities should be put on hold until a determination could be made regarding the potential duplication of these two similar programs. Staff continues to monitor progress of the 2-1-1 System, and remains in contact with the SHARE Network staff. Montana is pleased to see the 2-1-1 System's recently developed web-based referral product www.montana211.org.

X. State Administration

- A. *What technology infrastructure and/or management information systems does the State have in place to support the State and local workforce investment activities such as a One-Stop operating system designed to facilitate case management and service delivery across programs, a State job matching system, web-based self service tools for customers, fiscal management systems, etc.? (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(1), and 112(b)(8)(B).)*

Montana currently has in place several systems that support State and local workforce investment activities. The consolidation of reporting that occurred for Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, TAA, and WIA programs under a new system called MontanaWorks has allowed for web-based self service tools for employers and job seekers that can be accessed from the following link: jobs.mt.gov.

B. Describe the State's plan for use of the funds reserved for Statewide activities under WIA §128 (a)(1).

The State of Montana plans to use the Statewide activities funds to continue to support the monitoring and oversight role delegated to the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, the State Workforce Investment Board, maintaining and distributing the ETPL, incentives and technical assistance funds to the Local Workforce Investment Areas, and Governor Discretionary funds to support critical need and functions on a statewide basis.

C. Describe how any waivers or workflex authority (both existing and planned) will assist the State in developing its workforce investment system. (§§189(i)(1), 189 (i)(4)(A), and 192 .)

The State has a waiver to extend the time limit on the period of initial eligibility of training providers. The waiver extension allows Montana to better determine the most effective and efficient method of collecting training provider performance data, as well as alleviate provider concerns with the types and amount of information being requested. Any requests for waiver or workflex authority would be for the sole purpose of further development and enhancement of the workforce system. The State is requesting an extension in this plan

Single State Board:

The State has a waiver designating two workforce areas, development of a single statewide plan for the single statewide planning area, and establishing a consortium of the two areas to conduct business using a single administrative agency. Montana's waiver applies 20 CFR 551.300(f) permitting the State Board to carry out the roles of a local board in a single area state, to a single statewide planning area. The waiver allows the State to function as a single workforce planning area governed by a single board, which allows the state to meet many of the goals outlined in Section II of this plan including:

- Eliminate Duplicative Administrative Systems and Maximize Opportunities for training;
- Expand Montana's One-Stop System;
- Improve and expand collaboration of partners and integration of services;
- Increase the use of Waivers to address rural needs in Montana.

Montana is committed to using as much flexibility as possible through the use of waivers to address local workforce needs specific to a rural state and its rural communities. Montana's low population density, coupled with the nation's fourth largest geographic area, puts the State in a position to take advantage of the use of waivers to be innovative in our approach to meet these unique rural needs.

D. Performance Management and Accountability. Improved performance and accountability for customer-focused results are central features of WIA. To improve, states need not only systems in place to collect data and track performance, but also systems to analyze the

information and modify strategies to improve performance. (See Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 15-03, Common Measures Policy, December 10, 2003.) In this section, describe how the State measures the success of its strategies in achieving its goals, and how the State uses this data to continuously improve the system.

- 1. Describe the State's performance accountability system, including any state-system measures and the state's performance goals established with local areas. Identify the performance indicators and goals the State has established to track its progress toward meeting its strategic goals and implementing its vision for the workforce investment system. For each of the core indicators, explain how the State worked with local boards to determine the level of the performance goals. Include a discussion of how the levels compare with the State's previous outcomes as well as with the State-adjusted levels of performance established for other States (if available), taking into account differences in economic conditions, the characteristics of participants when they entered the program and the services to be provided. Include a description of how the levels will help the State achieve continuous improvement over the two years of the Plan. (§§112(b)(3) and 136(b)(3).)*

The Montana State Workforce Investment Board commits to clear goals and performance targets for the Workforce Investment Act. In turn, the State Board holds Montana's WIA service providers accountable for performance under the programs for which they receive funds. Montana will negotiate WIA performance in the context of a comprehensive workforce development system and intends to utilize cross-program measures that apply to multiple programs clearly focusing on putting people to work in high skill, high wage jobs.

Montana has not established any additional performance goals beyond those required by the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. Local workforce areas are held accountable to achieve the State's existing negotiated performance levels. Montana will continue to collect the necessary data to analyze the core indicators outlined in WIA.

The Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau in the Department of Labor and Industry uses program operator past and current performance information to determine baseline negotiated performance levels for the core indicators that are submitted to the USDOL.

The State's negotiated performance levels for the past two years have been close to or higher than most of the GPRA performance goals for core indicators. Montana has consistently shown improvement by either meeting or exceeding negotiated performance levels, or achieving the lower limit.

The State realizes that continuous improvement of the workforce system is an expected goal. Therefore, the State set a higher threshold for proposed negotiated levels for each of the core indicators for the next two years.

WIA Title 1B performance data for Montana's local areas is kept in MontanaWorks. MontanaWorks contains data from WIA Title 1B and Wagner-Peyser. In June 2007 TAA is expected to be incorporated in MontanaWorks. This move enables the State to better coordinate services for participants and allow better analysis of the system's performance, facilitating discussion on ways to improve performance at the local level. MontanaWorks

integrates all Montana's workforce programs to provide system-wide analysis of the workforce system, and thus to determine future focus and necessary changes.

Montana was one of seven states that participated in the NGA Integrated Performance Information (IPI) project during 2004, and has been working through the State Board to implement the common measures identified in the IPI Blueprint for States that was disseminated by the project team in February 2005.

The State Board produced the "*Snapshot 2006*" document. This tool is a spreadsheet that shows a clear picture of Montana's Workforce Development System and the more than \$147 million dollars that were allocated to the system in 2006. The document shows the oversight agency, who administers the services, the intended client, and the dollars allocated to the programs.

The intent is to incorporate the IPI performance measurement outcomes into a Scorecard of historical data in the *Snapshot* document that is published annually by the State Board, to monitor and ensure continuous improvement of the statewide workforce system across programs.

2. *Describe any targeted applicant groups under WIA Title I, the Wagner-Peyser Act or Title 38 Chapters 41 and 42 (Veterans Employment and Training Programs) that the State tracks. (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(3) and 136(b)(2)(C).)*

Montana is committed to providing quality workforce services to all Montanans. Given limited resources and economic conditions, local area providers are encouraged to provide services to adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, and to the disabled. Montana will continually work to assure the full array of workforce services are available to veterans, Native and aging populations.

3. *Identify any performance outcomes or measures in addition to those prescribed by WIA and what process is the State using to track and report them?*

Montana currently does not track performance measures for the workforce system outside those prescribed by the WIA. However, Montana was one of seven states that participated in the NGA Integrated Performance Information (IPI) project during 2004, and will be working through the State Board to implement the common measures identified in the IPI Blueprint for States that was disseminated by the project team in February 2005. This data will be incorporated into a Scorecard of historical data in the *Snapshot* document that is published annually by the State Board.

4. *Describe the State's common data system and reporting processes in place to track progress. Describe what data will be collected from the various One-Stop partners (beyond that required by DOL), use of quarterly wage records (including how your State accesses wage records), and how the Statewide system will have access to the information needed to continuously improve. (§112(b)(8)(B).)*

Montana currently uses MontanaWorks for data collection on WIA Title 1B programs. There are currently other systems in place to capture data for other workforce investment programs.

This system captures data from all USDOL workforce investment programs. It is currently being used for Wagner-Peyser programs, WIA programs, National Emergency grants, and in June 2007 the Trade Act programs will be incorporated.

Montana's State staff has viewing access to Unemployment Insurance (UI) data. Several staff people also have rights to view the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS), which provides out-of-state UI wage data for some participants in Montana's workforce programs. This data is confidential, and is provided to individual service providers in an aggregated format.

5. *Describe any actions the Governor and State Board will take to ensure collaboration with key partners and continuous improvement of the Statewide workforce investment system. (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(1).)*

Montana's State Board and its committees are comprised of business leaders, local representatives and elected officials, and state agency leaders who are dedicated to the continuous improvement of the workforce system.

Montana was one of seven states that participated in the NGA Integrated Performance Information (IPI) project during 2004, and will be working through the State Board to implement the common measures identified in the IPI Blueprint for States that was disseminated by the project team in February 2005. This data will be incorporated into a Scorecard of historical data in the Workforce System *Snapshot* document that is published annually by the State Board, to monitor and ensure continuous improvement of the Statewide workforce system across programs.

6. ***How do the State and local boards evaluate performance? What corrective actions (including sanctions and technical assistance) will the State take if performance falls short of expectations? How will the State and Local Boards use the review process to reinforce the strategic direction of the system? (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(1), and 112(b)(3).)***

The State evaluates performance in several ways: through oversight, annual monitoring, and quarterly and annual performance reporting. Data validation is conducted on an annual basis to ensure that appropriate documentation exists and that data in the performance reporting system is correct.

The State Board evaluates performance on a quarterly basis by utilizing performance-reporting options in the MontanaWorks. Performance report handouts are distributed at each board meeting. These reports show levels of performance for each individual service provider and indicate potential problems in meeting performance goals.

The State Board continues to review and monitor performance and make technical assistance available to service providers as necessary, in order to continually move toward Montana's vision to integrate services and improve delivery of services within the system.

An under-performing local service delivery area is required to complete a corrective action plan that is reviewed and approved by the State Workforce Oversight and Monitoring Bureau staff. The State will provide technical assistance and training in support of the local corrective action plan. The State staff also reports to the State Board regarding current status of

monitoring reports, findings of compliance, or any issues requiring corrective action and the adherence of local boards to the corrective action plan. In any instance where there are issues the State Board feels are significant enough to warrant informing the Governor, the Board will issue a report identifying the issue(s) and direction or action that the Board has taken to address their concerns. If the State Board determines sanctions are necessary, the Board will submit a report to the Governor addressing the issues of non-compliance and lack of corrective action, and recommend the sanctions deemed necessary by the State Board.

7. *What steps, if any, has the State taken to prepare for implementation of new reporting requirements against the common performance measures as described in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL), 15-03, December 10, 2003, Common Measures Policy. NOTE: ETA will issue additional guidance on reporting requirements for common measures.*

Montana currently uses MontanaWorks for performance data collection. Updates and technical assistance regarding the MontanaWorks data collection system, performance, and common measures are ongoing.

8. *Include a proposed level for each performance measure for each of the two program years covered by the Plan. While the plan is under review, the state will negotiate with the respective ETA Regional Administrator to set the appropriate levels for the next two years. At a minimum, states must identify the performance indicators required under section 136, and, for each indicator, the State must develop an objective and quantifiable performance goal for two program years. States are encouraged to address how the performance goals for local workforce investment areas and training provides will help them attain their statewide performance goals. (§§112(b)(3) and 136.)*

Below are the proposed negotiated performance levels for Montana, for PY 2007 and PY 2008.

| Performance Measure | PY-07 (07/01/07 - 06-30-08) | PY-08 (07/01/08 - 06-30-09) |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Adult | | |
| Entered Employment | 83.2% | 84.2% |
| Employment & Retention | 86.8% | 88.0% |
| Six Months Average Earnings | \$10,900 | \$11,700 |
| Employment & Credential | 71.0% | 72.0% |
| WIA Dislocated Worker | | |
| Entered Employment | 81.0% | 82.0% |
| Employment & Retention | 90.0% | 91.0% |
| Six Months Average Earnings | \$13,900 | \$15,000 |
| Employment & Credential | 71.0% | 72.0% |
| WIA Older Youth | | |
| Entered Employment | 82.0% | 83.0% |
| Employment & Retention | 67.0% | 88.0% |
| Six Months Average Earnings | \$3,600 | \$3,700 |
| Employment & Credential | 63.0% | 64.0% |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| WIA Younger Youth | | |
| Skill Attainment | 91.0% | 92.0% |
| Diploma or Equivalent | 66.0% | 67.0% |
| Placement and Retention | 70.0% | 71.0% |
| Common Measures: | | |
| Placement in Employment / Education | 63.7% | 64.7% |
| Attainment of Degree / Certificate | 56.5% | 57.5% |
| Literacy / Numeracy | 50.0% | 50.0% |
| WIA Customer Satisfaction | | |
| Participants | 85.0% | 86.0% |
| Employers | 89.0% | 90.0% |

Below is a condensed table reflecting Montana's performance levels for each performance measure for PY 2003 through PY 2006.

| | Performance Measures | Negotiated PY 2003 | Actual PY 2003 | Negotiated PY 2004 | Actual PY 2004 | Negotiated PY 2005 | Actual PY 2005 | Negotiated PY 2006 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Adult | Entered employment rate | 73.0% | 75.6 | 74.0% | 80.2% | 81.0% | 87.3% | 82.0% |
| | Employment retention rate | 86.0% | 86.4 | 87.0% | 84.1% | 83.0% | 85.5% | 85.0% |
| | Six months earnings change | \$3,500 | \$3,704 | \$3,550 | \$4,646 | \$4,100 | \$4,537 | ----- |
| | Six months average earnings | | | | | ----- | ----- | \$10,100 |
| | Employment & credential rate | 56.0% | 68.1 | 57.0% | 69.0% | 70.0% | 69.5% | 71.0% |
| Dislocated Worker | Entered employment rate | 78.3% | 72.8 | 79.0% | 77.0% | 80.0% | 83.8% | 81.0% |
| | Employment retention rate | 89.0% | 91.5 | 90.0% | 86.5% | 89.0% | 89.0% | 90.0% |
| | Six months earnings change | 91.0% | 102.1 | 92.0% | 90.3% | \$275 | -\$440 | ----- |
| | Six months average earnings | | | | | ----- | ----- | \$13,900 |
| | Employment & credential rate | 61.8% | 64.1 | 62.8% | 65.5% | 70.0% | 70.7% | 71.0% |
| Older Youth | Entered employment rate | 73.0% | 83.3 | 74.0% | 67.7% | 76.0% | 81.6% | 77.0% |
| | Employment retention rate | 84.0% | 83.3 | 85.0% | 82.5% | 86.0% | 89.1% | 87.0% |
| | Six months earnings change | \$3,200 | \$3,330 | \$3,250 | \$3,467 | \$3,400 | \$5,659 | \$3,500 |
| | Employment & credential rate | 60.0% | 58.8 | 61.0% | 51.3% | 62.0% | 68.0% | 63.0% |
| Younger Youth | Skill attainment rate | 81.0% | 87.2 | 82.0% | 89.5% | 89.0% | 82.3% | 91.0% |
| | Diploma or equiv attainment rate | 55.0% | 55.6 | 56.0% | 68.6% | 63.0% | 63.4% | 65.0% |
| | Retention rate | 56.0% | 64.1 | 57.0% | 70.3% | 67.0% | 70.2% | 69.0% |
| Customer Satisfaction | Participants | 80.0% | 85.1 | 80.0% | 83.9% | 84.0% | 86.7% | 84.0% |
| | Employers | 85.0% | 94.1 | 85.0% | 87.6% | 88.0% | 92.1% | 90.0% |

E. Administrative Provisions

1. *Provide a description of the appeals process referred to in §116(a)(5)(m).*

A petitioner for local area designation may appeal the action of the State Workforce Investment Board or the Governor by requesting an independent review. Such a request must be in writing from the local Chief Elected Official to the Governor within thirty (30) days of the date of denial and must include factors the petitioner deems necessary to be considered in the review. Upon request, the Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau will provide a hearing by an impartial hearing officer that has no interest in the outcome. The

hearing officer will make a recommendation to the Governor regarding the appeal within sixty (60) days from receipt of the notice to provide a hearing. The Governor will issue a final decision on designation.

The petitioner may appeal the Governor's decision to the Secretary if the final decision is an adverse decision or if no designation is made. (State WIA Policy Manual Section 4.60 ETP Appeal Process)

2. *Describe the steps taken by the State to ensure compliance with the non-discrimination requirements outlined in §188.*

The State developed a Methods of Administration (MOA) that reflects the Governor's commitment to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity. The nine elements outlined in the MOA outline Montana's policy on the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements of WIA Title I Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 37. Because the Department of Labor and Industry is an umbrella agency for U.S. Department of Labor funded programs, the provisions of the MOA apply to Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance and WIA Title IB financially assisted programs, activities and recipients. The State issued Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination policy including requirements for Notice of Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination such as posting notices in English and Spanish in all Title IB adult, youth and dislocated worker provider sites and providing notice to participants as well as maintaining a signed notice in participant files; the complaint processing procedures; universal access; monitoring for equal opportunity and nondiscrimination to the Local Workforce Investment Boards.

The State conducts an annual review of each Local Area at which time a compliance review for equal opportunity and nondiscrimination is performed.

XI. Assurances

1. The State assures that it will establish, in accordance with section 184 of the Workforce Investment Act, fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through the allotments made under sections 127 and 132. (§112(b)(11).)
2. The State assures that it will comply with section 184(a)(6), which requires the Governor to, every two years, certify to the Secretary, that -
 - a. the State has implemented the uniform administrative requirements referred to in section 184(a)(3);
 - b. the State has annually monitored local areas to ensure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements as required under section 184(a)(4); and
 - c. the State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with section 184 (a)(3) pursuant to section 184(a)(5). (§184(a)(6).)
3. The State assures that the adult and youth funds received under the Workforce Investment Act will be distributed equitably throughout the State, and that no local areas will suffer significant shifts in funding from year to year during the period covered by this Plan. (§112(b)(12)(B).)

4. The State assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in section 134 of the Workforce Investment Act, and the activities authorized in chapters 41 and 42 of Title 38 US code. The State assures that it will comply with the veteran's priority established in the Jobs for Veterans Act. (38 USC 4215.)
5. The State assures that it will comply with the confidentiality requirements of section 136(f)(3).
6. The State assures that no funds received under the Workforce Investment Act will be used to assist, promote, or deter union organizing. (§181(b)(7).)
7. The State assures that it will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188, including an assurance that a Methods of Administration has been developed and implemented (§188.)
8. The State assures that it will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188. (§185.).
9. The State assures that it will comply with the grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary (pursuant to the authority at section 189(c) of the Act) which are necessary to enter into grant agreements for the allocation and payment of funds under the Act. The procedures and agreements will be provided to the State by the ETA Office of Grants and Contract Management and will specify the required terms and conditions and assurances and certifications, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - General Administrative Requirements:
 - 29 CFR part 97 --Uniform Administrative Requirements for State and Local Governments (as amended by the Act)
 - 29 CFR part 96 (as amended by OMB Circular A-133) --Single Audit Act
 - OMB Circular A-87 --Cost Principles (as amended by the Act)
 - Assurances and Certifications:
 - SF 424 B --Assurances for Non-construction Programs
 - 29 CFR part 37 --Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and regulation) 29 CFR § 37.20
 - CFR part 93 --Certification Regarding Lobbying (and regulation)
 - 29 CFR part 98 --Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension Certifications (and regulation)
 - Special Clauses/Provisions:

Other special assurances or provisions as may be required under Federal law or policy, including specific appropriations legislation, the Workforce Investment Act, or subsequent Executive or Congressional mandates.
10. The State certifies that the Wagner-Peyser Act Plan, which is part of this document, has been certified by the State Employment Security Administrator.
11. The State certifies that veterans' services provided with Wagner-Peyser Act funds will be in compliance with 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41 and 20 CFR part 1001.

12. The State certifies that Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities will be provided by merit-based public employees in accordance with DOL regulations.
13. The State assures that it will comply with the MSFW significant office requirements in accordance with 20 CFR part 653.
14. The State certifies it has developed this Plan in consultation with local elected officials, the business community, labor organizations and other one-stop partners.
15. As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIA, the grant applicant assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws:
 - Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I--financially assisted program or activity;
 - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color and national origin;
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;
 - The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and
 - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs. The grant applicant also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the grant applicant's operation of the WIA Title I--financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the WIA Title I--financially assisted program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.
16. The State assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act and their regulations, written Department of Labor Guidance implementing these laws, and all other applicable Federal and State laws and regulations.

Attachment A:

ETA Regional Administrators

Region 1 – Boston/New York

Douglas Small
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor/ETA
JFK Federal Building, Rm. E-350
Boston, MA 02203
(617) 788-0170
FAX: 617-788-0101
Small.Douglas@dol.gov

Region 2 – Philadelphia

Lenita Jacobs-Simmons
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor/ETA
The Curtis Center
170 South Independence Mall W Ste 825 E
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3315
(215) 861-5205
FAX: 215-861-5260
Jacobs-simmons.lenita@dol.gov

Region 3 – Atlanta

Helen Parker
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor/ETA
Atlanta Federal Center Rm. 6M12
61 Forsyth Street SW
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 562-2092
FAX: 404-562-2149
Parker.Helen@dol.gov

Region 4 – Dallas/Denver

Joseph C. Juarez
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor/ETA
Federal Building, Rm. 317
525 Griffin Street
Dallas, TX 75202
(214) 727-8263
FAX: 214-767-5113
Juarez.joseph@dol.gov

Region 5 – Chicago/Kansas City

Byron Zuidema
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor/ETA
230 S. Dearborn St. Rm. 628
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 596-5400
FAX: 312-596-5401
Zuidema.byron@dol.gov

Region 6 – San Francisco/Seattle

Richard Trigg
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor/ETA
71 Stevenson Street Rm. 830
San Francisco, CA 94119-3767
(415) 975-4610
FAX: 415-975-4612
trigg.richard@dol.gov

Attachment B:

Program Administration Designees and Plan Signatures

Name of WIA Title I Grant Recipient Agency Workforce Services Division, Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau

Address: PO Box 1728, 1327 Lockey Avenue
Helena, MT 59624

Telephone Number: (406) 444-2416 Facsimile Number: (406) 444-3037

Email Address: ichildress@mt.gov

Name of WIA Title I Administrative Agency Same as above

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Facsimile Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Name of WIA Title I Signatory Official Ingrid Childress, Administrator

Address: Workforce Services Division, DLI
PO Box 1728, Helena, MT 59624

Telephone Number: (406) 444-2648 Facsimile Number: (406) 444-3037

Email Address: ichildress@mt.gov

Name of WIA Title I Liaison Ingrid Childress, Administrator

Workforce Services Division, DLI
Address: PO Box 1728

Helena, MT 59624

Telephone Number: (406) 444-2416 Facsimile Number: (406) 444-3037

Email Address: ichildress@mt.gov

Name of WIA Title I Grant Recipient/

State Employment Security Agency Ingrid Childress, Administrator

Address: Workforce Services Division, DLI

PO Box 1728, Helena, MT 59624

Telephone Number: (406) 444-2648 Facsimile Number: (406) 444-3037

Email Address: ichildress@mt.gov

Name and Title of State Employment Security Administrator (Signatory Official)

Ingrid Childress Title: Administrator, Workforce Services Division

Address: PO Box 1728

Helena, MT 59624

Telephone Number: (406) 444-2648 Facsimile Number: (406) 444-3037

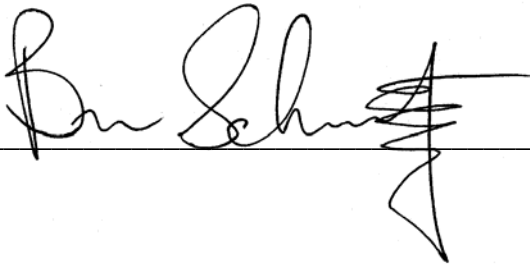
Email Address: ichildress@mt.gov

As Governor of Montana, I certify that for the State of Montana, the agencies and officials designated above have been duly designated to represent the State in the capacities indicated for the Workforce Investment Act, Title I, and Wagner-Peyser Act grant programs. Subsequent changes in the designation of officials will be provided to the U.S. Department of Labor as such changes occur.

I further certify that we will operate our Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act Programs in accordance with the approved WIA 2-Year State Plan and the Plan Modifications contained herein.

Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer

Signature



Date 4/22/2007

Attachment C:

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

This section is designed to provide the grievance and complaint procedure as required in the Workforce Investment Act.

WIA Sec. 181(c)

Whenever any person, organization or agency believes that a Governor, WIA grant recipient or other subrecipient (e.g., service providers, contractors) has engaged in conduct that violates the Act and that such conduct also violates a Federal statute other than WIA, or a State or local law, that person, organization or agency may, with respect to the non-WIA cause of action, institute a civil action or pursue other remedies authorized under other Federal, State or local law against the Governor, WIA grant recipient or other subrecipient without first exhausting the remedies in this section. Nothing in the Act or WIA regulations:

1. Allows any person or organization to join or sue the Secretary with respect to the Secretary's responsibilities under WIA except after exhausting the remedies in this section;
2. Allows any person or organization to file a suit which alleges a violation of WIA or these regulations without first exhausting the administrative remedies described in this section; or
3. May be construed to create a private right of action with respect to alleged violations of WIA or the regulations.

I. Grievance and Complaints for Non-Criminal Complaints

This section deals with the handling of non-criminal complaints. Criminal complaints are to be handled as specified in 20 CFR 629.55.

A. Introduction to Complaints and Grievances

1. Complaints

A **complaint** is an allegation of discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, or participation in the program, and is covered by the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions at 29 CFR 37.30.

An allegation of retaliation, intimidation or reprisal for taking action or participating in any action to secure rights protected under WIA Section 188 will be processed as a complaint.

2. Grievances

A **grievance** is a complaint about services, working conditions, wages, work assignment, etc., arising in connection with WIA programs operated by WIA recipients including service providers, eligible training providers, and other contractors.

In order to direct a complaint or grievance properly, it must be determined whether the complaint is a program or discrimination complaint. When a participant or employee alleges unfair treatment, find out what she or he believes to be the reason for the treatment. It is appropriate to ask the complainant if the alleged unfair treatment was due to one of the prohibited factors under the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity regulations at 29 CFR Part 37 or related to working conditions such as work scheduling or assignments.

If the individual alleging unfair treatment cannot or does not cite a reason that it is a prohibited factor, then the complaint must be processed using the separate grievance procedure.

NOTE: A complaint cannot be processed as both a program complaint and as a discrimination complaint.

B. Filing A Grievance

1. Who May File

Any individual, including WIA program participants, applicants, staff, employers, board members or any other individual who believes they received unfair treatment in a Workforce Investment Act employment and training program may file a grievance.

2. When Should a Grievance Be Filed

Grievances must be filed within **one (1) year** of the alleged occurrence.

3. Where May a Grievance Be Filed

Grievances may be filed directly with the service provider or with the State Equal Opportunity Officer.

4. The Grievance Process

- a. The service provider may attempt to resolve the issue informally within fourteen (14) calendar days following the filing of the grievance. If the grievance is filed directly with the State Equal Opportunity Officer, the EO officer will work with the service provider and the grievant to attempt to resolve the issue informally.

Whether or not conciliation occurs, a written agreement (the WIA Conciliation Form is recommended for use but is not mandatory and an appropriate substitute form may be used) shall be executed, signed by both the grievant and the service provider.

- b. The grievant has the right to a due process hearing if informal resolution cannot be reached. The grievant must be advised of the possibility of a due process hearing within thirty (30) days from the date the grievance was filed; and
- c. The grievant has the right to a receipt of a final decision within sixty (60) days from the date the grievance was filed.

C. Filing a Complaint

1. Who May File

Any applicant or registrant requesting aid, benefits, or seeking services or training through the WIA JobLINC workforce system; eligible applicants/registrants; participants; employees; applicants for employment; service providers, eligible service providers (as defined in 29 CFR Part 37.4) and staff; and staff within the Montana Department of Labor and Industry (State Oversight Agency); who believes that he/she or any other specific class of individuals, has been or is being subjected to discrimination prohibited under the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions at 29 CFR 37 and Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 including: Race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, political affiliation or belief, citizenship (beneficiaries only), and participation in any programs under WIA Title IB (beneficiaries), must be given the option to file a written complaint by his/herself or through a representative to the State of Montana Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer or the Civil Rights Center.

Where possible the identity of any person who has furnished information relating to, or assisted in an investigation of a possible violation of the Act will be held in confidence to the extent possible with a fair determination of the issues.

2. When Must A Complaint Be Filed

Complaints must be filed within **180 days** of the alleged discrimination. When a complaint is untimely filed with the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer the complaint WILL NOT be processed until a waiver of the filing period is received from the Director of the Civil Rights Center. The State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer will assist the complainant in requesting the waiver from the Civil Rights Center. The Director of the Civil Rights Center may, for good cause shown, extend the filing time.

3. Where May a Complaint Be Filed

All complaints of discrimination **must** be in writing and **must** be filed directly with the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer in the Montana Department of Labor and Industry **OR** directly with the Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor. Complaints should not be filed simultaneously with the Civil Rights Center and the State WIA Equal Opportunity Officer.

Complaints filed with the State Equal Opportunity Officer should be addressed to:

Pam Watson State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer
Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau
P. O. Box 1728, Helena, Montana 59624

e-mail address: pwatson@mt.gov
(406) 444-1620 or 1-800-457-3249 / TTY (406) 444-0532
Fax: (406) 444-3037

OR A COMPLAINT MAY BE FILED WITH:

Civil Rights Center
The Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC)
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Room N-4123
Washington, DC 20210

NOTE: Complaints of discrimination because of creed or marital status pursuant to Title 49 Human Rights of the Montana Codes Annotated (MCA) will be referred to the Montana Human Rights Commission.

4. What Information Must be in the Complaint

Each complaint must be in writing and must include:

- (a) Complainant's name and address (or specify another means of contacting him or her.
- (b) The identification of the respondent (the individual or entity that the complainant alleges is responsible for the discrimination);
- (c) A description of the complainant's allegations in sufficient detail to allow the State Equal Opportunity Officer and/or the Civil Rights Center to determine whether the complaint:
 - (1) Falls within the Workforce Investment Act Section 188 and Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Regulations at 29 CFR Part 37;
 - (2) Was filed timely;
 - (3) Has merit; in other words, if the allegations are true was there a violation of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions; and
 - (4) The complainant's or the complainant's authorized representative signature on the complaint.

Service providers should assist the aggrieved party in filing a written complaint and/or completing the Complaint Information Form if requested. The State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer will also assist in filing a written complaint if requested.

5. Forms To Use When Filing Complaints

Complaints will be accepted regardless of the format, however complainants are encouraged to use the Complaint Information Form (CIF – DL 1-2014a) for filing complaints of discrimination.

A copy of the Complaint Information Form is in the Forms section of this manual (service providers may reproduce the form as needed) and can also be accessed through the Civil Rights Center website at <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/Cife.pdf>

6. The Complaint Processing Procedure

Complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries of Workforce Investment Act Title I financially assisted programs citizenship or participation in a Workforce Investment Act funded program as set forth in Section 188 of the Act will be processed as set forth in 29 CFR Part 37.70.

The complaint procedure applies to all individuals entering the One-Stop center or partner agency who are participating in the Workforce Investment Act including programs and services and employment, those currently receiving Workforce Investment Act services (core, intensive or training), employees of any Workforce Investment Act Title IB-funded entity (Workforce Investment Area staff or service providers) and applicants for WIA Title IB funding.

a. Acknowledgement of the Complaint

The State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer will, within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint provide acknowledgement to the complainant of receipt of the complaint. The acknowledgement will include, in writing, a statement of the issue(s) to the complainant that provides the following information:

- (1) a list of issues raised by the complainant;
- (2) for each issue, a statement of whether or not the issue is accepted or rejected and the reasons for any rejections of an issue;
- (3) the options available, including Alternative Dispute Resolution or a fact-finding investigation, for processing their complaint and the time period in which the complainant has to request an Alternative Dispute Resolution or fact finding investigation;
- (4) a statement advising the complainant that they must request their preference of either Alternative Dispute Resolution or a fact-finding investigation within ten(10) days of receipt of written acknowledgement of their complaint;
- (5) the options available for processing their complaint such as an investigation or Alternative Dispute Resolution.

The State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer will also notify complainants, within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, in writing, if the complaint does not fall within Workforce Investment Act jurisdiction for processing complaints alleging discrimination under Section 188 or Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination provisions at 29 CFR Part 37. That notification shall include the basis of the determination as well as a statement of the complainant's right to file with CRC within thirty (30) days. NOTE: The Director of CRC may extend the 30-day time period for good cause shown.

Following the determination that:

- (1) the complaint has merit;
- (2) is within the Workforce Investment Act jurisdiction; and
- (3) the complainant has chosen the manner in which she or he wants their complaint processed the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer will provide:
 - (a) notice to all parties of the specific charges and responses of those involved;
 - (b) an impartial mediator if ADR is chosen;
 - (c) notice of the right of both parties to representation;
 - (d) notice of the right of each party to present evidence;
 - (e) notice to each party of the right to question others who present evidence; and
 - (f) the right to a decision made strictly on the recorded evidence.

b. Complaint Processing Time Frame

- (1) If a complainant elects to file a complaint with the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer, she or he shall allow for ninety (90) days in which to process the complaint and provide a written Notice of Final Action to the complainant.
- (2) If, during the 90-day period, the complainant has:
 - (a) Received a decision resulting from an investigation that she or he considers unsatisfactory, the complainant or his/her representative may file a complaint with CRC within thirty (30) days after the complainant is notified of the decision on the complaint.
 - (b) Not received a Notice of Final Action (decision) or notification of resolution the complainant or his/her representative may file with the Director of CRC. The complainant must file within thirty (30) days from the date the decision should have been issued.

II. Resolution Process

A. Alternative Dispute Resolution

1. Complainants must be given a choice as to the manner in which they wish to have their complaint processed, which include; an investigation conducted by the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer; or; through an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). The choice whether to use ADR or the customary process of conducting an investigation rests entirely with the complainant. Mediation is the

recommended Alternative Dispute Resolution and will be conducted by an impartial mediator provided through a contract for services between the Bureau and the Employment Relations Division of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry.

Complainants must notify the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer within ten (10) days after receiving the letter acknowledging their complaint of their choice of complaint processing through Alternative Dispute Resolution.

The Employment Relations Division of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry will provide an impartial mediator and will provide interested parties information regarding the manner in which the mediation will be conducted; and the date, time and place for mediation.

2. Time Frame

The period for attempting to resolve the complaint through mediation is twenty (20) days from the date the complainant chooses mediation.

a. Successful Mediation

Upon completion of successful mediation the complainant and respondent will both sign a conciliation agreement attesting that the complaint has been resolved.

A copy of the conciliation agreement will be provided to the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer within ten (10) days of the date the conciliation agreement was signed.

b. Unsuccessful Mediation

In the event that mediation was not successful the complainant has the option of requesting a fact-finding investigation.

The request for a fact-finding investigation must be submitted, in writing, **within ten (10) days** after the complainant determines that the mediation was unsuccessful to the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer.

Complainants may not request mediation after a hearing or fact-finding investigation process has taken place.

B. Fact-Finding Investigation Process

If the complainant requests an investigation as his or her choice of resolution the State WIA Equal Opportunity Officer will have sixty (60) days from the date the complaint was filed, in which to conduct an investigation. The investigation may include interviewing the complainant and respondent, interviewing witnesses, and reviewing pertinent files and records.

In order to meet the ninety (90) day time frame for issuing decisions and allow the State WIA Equal Opportunity Officer adequate time to conduct an investigation should the mediation fail, the State will have thirty (30) days in which to investigate the complaint. The mediator will notify the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer immediately that the mediation process was unsuccessful.

C. Complainant Responsibility

The complainant may amend the complaint at any point **prior to:**

1. the beginning of mediation; or
2. the fact-finding investigation

The complainant may withdraw the complaint at any time.

If at any time during the process the complainant fails to cooperate, she or he shall be given notice that the complaint will be administratively closed within **ten (10) calendar days**, unless good cause is shown.

D. Breach of Agreement

Any party to any agreement reached under ADR may file a complaint with the Director of the Civil Rights Center in the event the agreement is breached. The non-breaching party may file a complaint with the Director within thirty (30) days of the date that party learns of the alleged breach.

If the parties do not reach an agreement under ADR, the complainant may file a complaint with the Director of the Civil Rights Center. The address for filing in the event of a breach in the agreement or lack of agreement follows:

Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC)
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N-4123
Washington, DC 20210

E. Waivers

The State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer may grant a waiver, for good cause, if it appears that additional time is needed to make all reasonable efforts to resolve the complaint. An example of a good cause might be one of the following:

1. Mediation may be the availability, or lack of, of a mediator(s) during the time frame for the mediation period, or an acceptable conflict with the time frame by the complainant;
2. Investigations may be issues with schedules for interviews or availability of staff to conduct an investigation.

The waiver may be requested by the complainant, the respondent, service provider, mediator or the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer. Waivers must be agreed to and signed by both the complainant and respondent.

F. Administrative Decision

The State will have **ninety (90) days** from the date the complaint was received to issue a decision.

The Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry will issue the final decision based on recommendations from the Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer.

III. **Service Provider and Employer Responsibilities**

In order to meet the complaint processing requirements in the Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Regulations at 29 CFR Part 37.77 and Montana's Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Methods of Administration all Workforce Investment Act Title IB funding recipients including: WIA Title IB providers of intensive and training services; and employers including private-for-profit employers of Workforce Investment Act participants *must* adopt this complaint procedure for complaints alleging violations of any prohibited factor under the equal opportunity and nondiscrimination provisions of the Workforce Investment Act. Adoption of these elements should be noted in personnel handbooks.

Designated Equal Opportunity Officers

Workforce Investment Act Title I adult, youth and dislocated worker service providers as defined in Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Regulations at 29 CFR Part 37.4 are not required to designate an Equal Opportunity Officer with the same responsibilities as the State designated Equal Opportunity Officers. However, they must assign an individual the responsibility of;

1. ensuring equal opportunity and nondiscrimination is applied to everyone;
2. assisting the individual in completing the Complaint Information Form (DL 1-2014a) and advising them of their right to file a complaint with the State Workforce Investment Act Equal Opportunity Officer OR the Civil Rights Center; and
3. serving as liaison for Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination matters between the agency and the State Designated Equal Opportunity Officer. As liaison that individual will be the contact person during due process activities.

IV.Complaints Alleging Retaliation, Intimidation or Reprisal

Complaints alleging retaliation for taking actions or participating in any action to secure rights protected under the equal opportunity and nondiscrimination provisions found in Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 37 of the Workforce Investment Act may be filed using the procedures described above.

WIA TRAINING PROVIDER APPEAL PROCESS

I. Appeal Procedures

The Workforce Investment Act requires the Governor to establish procedures for providers of training services to appeal a denial of eligibility or termination of eligibility.

20 CFR Part 667.640(b)

A. Basis for Appeal

Eligible providers of training services may file an appeal due to:

1. Denial by the designated State Agency under WIA Section 122 (b), (c), or (e)
2. Termination or eligibility or other action by the State Agency under WIA Section 122(f);
3. Denial of eligibility as a provider of on-the-job training or customized training by a One-Stop operator under WIA Section 122 (h).

B. Filing an Appeal

1. Timeline for Filing an Appeal

Appeals must be in writing and submitted within forty-five (45) days of being notified of a denial or termination to:

State WIA Equal Opportunity Officer
Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau
P.O. Box 1728
Helena, MT 59624

2. The appeal must be signed by an authorized individual from the training provider and should include:
 - a. Name of the training provider;
 - b. Address and phone number of the training provider
 - c. An explanation of why an appeal is being filed
3. The State WIA Equal Opportunity Officer will assist the training provider in filing a written appeal and advise the training provider of the opportunity that a hearing will be provided within thirty calendar days of the filing of the appeal. The Legal Services Division of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry will provide an impartial hearings officer to conduct the hearing process.
 - a. Interested parties will be provided:
 - (a) Notice of hearing;
 - (b) The manner in which the hearing will be conducted;
 - (c) Written notice of the date, time, and place of hearing;
 - (d) An opportunity to present evidence;
 - (e) Written decision;
 - b. The training provider or respondent may with good cause, request a rescheduling of the hearings;
 - c. The training provider will have the burden of establishing the facts and the entitlement to the relief requested;
 - d. The training provider or respondent has the right to representation by an attorney or other representative.

e.

The hearing officer will have sixty days from receipt of the notice to provide a hearing. The Governor will issue a final decision.

C. Decisions Under The State Appeal Process May Not Be Appealed To The Secretary

Attachment D:

MONTANA ONE-STOP CERTIFICATION PROCESS

One-Stop Systems play an integral role within the Workforce Investment Act's vision for statewide workforce development. The State Board, in an effort to align with federal strategies, will ensure consistency and the flexibility to create a statewide system with direct input from local communities and designed to meet local needs. The State Board has developed the general system criteria required for One-Stop Certification, and will be responsible for the certification of One-Stops. The State Board will also provide technical assistance and guidance to the maximum extent possible, in order to promote and expand the development of the One-Stop System in Montana.

Business Plan

Local entities requesting certification will submit a business plan through their Community Management Team (CMT) to the State Board. The State Board will establish standard criteria acceptable for acceptance and approval. The State Board must take action on the business plan within 90 days of submittal by the CMT, and notify the CMT in writing of the Board's determination.

If a business plan is denied, the Board must notify the CMT in writing, within the 90-day period, as to the reason(s) for denial, and provide a process improvement plan to assist the CMT with meeting the criteria for approval of the business plan. A CMT may submit a revised plan to the State Board at any time, which will re-initiate the process. The Board will establish an appeal process for denial of application.

On-Site Review

Once a business plan is approved, the State Board will conduct a site review within 60 days of the date the business plan was approved. The review will be conducted using the proposed business plan, and additional standardized criteria established/developed by the State Board, to include on-site monitoring, telephone or email interviews with site and partner staff, and other materials and information as approved. The Board will notify the CMT in writing within 30 days of the site review as to the determination of certification.

If the determination is favorable, the CMT will be awarded a certified status, and be provided the re-certification criteria. If the determination is not favorable, the CMT will be provided a corrective action plan along with the written determination, and afforded technical support and guidance from the State Board to assist with a second review. Within 60 days of receipt of a written response from the CMT addressing the issues of concern and requesting re-consideration, the State Board will conduct a site review and the site-review process will be reinitiated. The State Board will establish an appeal process for denial of application.

Re-Certification

Once a One-Stop is certified, every two years thereafter the State Board will conduct a re-certification, including an on-site review. In order to be re-certified, the One-Stop must meet the initial certification criteria. The State Board will establish an appeal process for denial of application.

Delegation of On-Site Reviews

If the State Board elects to designate their administrative entity to conduct the on-site review of One-Stops, the State Board is responsible for ensuring the above process is adhered to, and that they receive reports of One-Stop certification activities at each State Board meeting.

Appeals Process

The State Board is responsible for addressing issues that arise as a result of certification denial, or with the established appeals process. The State Board will work to implement a formal Appeals Process for incorporation into the One-Stop Process.

MONTANA ONE-STOP CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

In order to be considered for certification as a local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) One-Stop System, a Business Plan must be submitted by the Local Community Management Team (CMT) to the State Board for approval.

In addition, at least 80 % of the following criteria must be met, and a plan must be in place to meet the remaining 20 % within one (1) year of the date of certification:

1. At a minimum, a One-Stop system must provide the core services specified in WIA section 134(d)(2), and must provide access to other programs and activities carried out by the One-Stop partners. Additional partners may be required under the Act or the Business Plan, or voluntarily incorporated.

Co-location of programs is encouraged to the extent possible. Once a site is established, the site must utilize the term “One-Stop” as the common identifier. When selecting the site location, consideration must be given to customer accessibility.
2. A written agreement must detail management of the One-Stop and is to be reviewed, and if necessary revised, upon a change in key staff.
3. Co-located partners must have a written agreement or Operating Plan describing roles and responsibilities of each partner at the site. For those who are collaborating partners off-site, roles and responsibilities will be defined in an addendum to the co-located partner agreement.
4. All collaborating partners, those on and off site, must have the appropriate staff trained in the services provided by other partners, know who the contact person for each partner is, and can seamlessly refer clients or participants to the appropriate entity within each partner program.
5. Hotelling space must be made available at the site for visiting partner programs whenever feasible.
6. All partners, those on and off site, must have a resource area available to customers that is staffed, has information on all partners in the local system, and meets customer needs.
7. The site used for co-location must be accessible for those with disabilities and those who speak languages other than English.

Attachment E:

State Workforce Investment Board Conflict of Interest Policy

The State Workforce Investment Board recognizes its responsibility to ensure that its members conduct themselves in an unbiased manner and serve the goals established for Montana's workforce system. It is the responsibility of the State Board to guard against conflicts of interest that might compromise its integrity and objectivity. Neither membership on the State Board nor receipt of WIA funds to provide training and related services, by itself, violates the conflict of interest provisions provided a member does not vote on any matter relating to that interest.

This policy has been prepared to outline the Board's approach to identifying and evaluating potential conflicts of interest and assisting its members in addressing conflict of interest issues before a member takes an official action that might result in a breach of trust. The policy of the State Board provides members a means to avoid a conflict or the appearance of conflict between their financial or other personal interests and the goals and policies of the Board.

Conflict of interest exists if a Board member's vote leads to any form of immediate direct financial or personal gain for that member or for his or her family or the entity he or she represents. The term conflict of interest refers especially to situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or may have the appearance of compromising, the decisions made by a Board member. A conflict of interest is material if an ordinary person would take it into account in making a decision. Only material conflicts of interest are within the scope of this policy.

General Principles: Board members must ensure the integrity of their pursuits by taking steps to avoid a conflict of interest, or even the appearance of a conflict of interest. Because the complexity and diversity of personal and business relationships are extensive, and the perception of a conflict of interest may vary from one individual to another, the most effective means to address a conflict of interest is to establish a system under which Board members disclose potential, material conflicts before taking official board action.

If a member has a conflict of interest, he or she may not vote on any matter relating to that interest or otherwise use their influence to benefit themselves or any family member.

Identification of conflict of interest is not a simple task. A Board member has a conflict of interest if his or her judgment and discretion is or may be influenced by considerations either of personal gain or financial benefit. The following is a partial list of activities or actions that create a material conflict of interest that should be managed appropriately.

- a. Consulting activities on behalf of the State Workforce Investment Board.
- b. The purchase of goods or services from businesses in which the Board member, or his or her family, has a financial interest, or as a result of such purchase, may directly benefit.
- c. Receipt of gifts, gratuities, loans, or special favors (including trips or speaker's fees) from those involved in the State workforce system.
- d. Holding of an ownership interest by the Board member or the member's family in any real or personal property leased or purchased by the Board.
- e. Receipt, directly to the Board member of cash, services, or equipment provided for the Board member's support of workforce issues.
- f. Use of information received as a Board member for personal purposes.
- g. Activities that are in violation of federal, state, or local law, including the offering or acceptance of a bribe or kickback, are strictly prohibited.

Disclosure of a Board member's conflict of interest must be presented in writing to the State Board.

Attachment F:

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| AA..... | Affirmative Action |
| ABLE | Adult Basic and Literacy Education |
| ADA | Americans with Disabilities Act |
| ADR | Alternative Dispute Resolution |
| AFDC | Aid to Families With Dependent Children |
| AJB | America's Job Bank |
| ASL | American Sign Language |
| BOS..... | Balance of State Workforce Investment Area |
| CAC | Community Advisory Council (for the WoRC program) |
| CBO | Community-Based Organization |
| CDBG | Community Development Block Grant |
| CEO..... | Chief Elected Official |
| CEP | Concentrated Employment Program |
| CFR..... | Code of Federal Regulations |
| CMT..... | Community Management Teams (within One-Stop system) |
| CRC..... | Civil Rights Center |
| CRT..... | Classroom Training |
| CS/CI..... | Customer satisfaction/Continuous Improvement |
| CSP | Community Service program; the final program component of FAIM that provides assistance to families who have fully used their Pathways benefits but have not yet achieved self-sufficiency |
| DLI/DOLI | (Montana) Department of Labor and Industry |
| DOL | (U.S.) Department of Labor |
| DPHHS..... | (Montana) Department of Public Health and Human Services |
| DW | Dislocated Worker |
| EDP | Employability Development Plan |
| EEO..... | Equal Employment Opportunity |
| EER | Entered Employment Rate |
| EO | Equal Opportunity |
| ES..... | Employment Services (Wagner-Peyser) |
| E&T..... | Employment and Training |
| ETA..... | Employment and Training Administration USDOL |
| FMLA | Family Medical Leave Act |
| FY | Fiscal Year |
| GAO | Government Accounting Office |
| GED | General Equivalency Diploma |
| HRDC or HRC | Human Resource Development Council |
| HUD..... | (US Department of) Housing and Urban Development |
| IEP..... | Individual Employability Plan (for WIA Title IB adult and dislocated worker program participants) |
| IFB | Invitation for Bid |
| ISS..... | Individual Service Strategy (for WIA Title IB Youth program participants) |
| ITA..... | Individual Training Account |
| JSWC | Job Service Workforce Center |
| LD | Learning Disabilities |
| LEA..... | Local Education Agency |
| LEO..... | Local Elected Official |
| LEP | Limited English Proficiency |
| LMA..... | Labor Market Area |
| LMI..... | Labor Market Information |
| LWIA | Local Workforce Investment Area |
| LWIB | Local Workforce Investment Board |
| MACo | Montana Association of Counties |
| MCA | Montana Codes Annotated |
| MIS | Management Information System (Data) |
| MOA | Methods of Administration (Relating to Equal Opportunity & Nondiscrimination) |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| MOA | Memorandum of Agreement |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MSFW | Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers |
| NAWB | National Association of Workforce Boards |
| NACo | National Association of Counties |
| NAWDP | National Association of Workforce Development Professionals |
| OCHE | Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education |
| ODEP | Office of Disability Employment Policy (USDOL) |
| OIG | Office of Inspector General |
| OJT | On-the-Job Training |
| OMB | Office of Management and Budget |
| OPI | Office of Public Instruction |
| PATHWAYS | A time-limited cash assistance program designed to provide families with opportunities leading to self sufficiency |
| PCWA | Project Challenge: Work Again (Provides services to dislocated workers) |
| POP | Project Operating Plan |
| PY | Program Year for WIA the program year is from July 1 to June 30 |
| RCA | Refugee Cash Assistance |
| R&A | Research and Analysis Bureau, Workforce Services Division |
| RFP | Request for Proposal |
| SCSEP | Senior Community Services Employment Program |
| SDH | State Displaced Homemaker |
| SFY | State Fiscal Year |
| SP | Service Provider |
| SSI | Supplemental Security Income |
| SSDI | Social Security Disability Insurance |
| SWIB | (Governor's) State Workforce Investment Board |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| TAA | Trade Adjustment Assistance |
| TANF | Temporary Assistance to Needy Families |
| TAT | Technical Assistance and Training |
| TDD | Telecommunications device for the deaf |
| TEGL | Training and Employment Guidance Letter |
| TEN | Training and Employment Notice |
| TTY | Teletypewriter (Communications device for the deaf) |
| UI | Unemployment Insurance |
| USDOL | United States Department of Labor |
| VOC-ED | Vocational Education |
| VR/Voc-Rehab | Vocational Rehabilitation |
| WEX | Work Experience WIA Workforce Investment Act of 1998 |
| WFC | Workforce Center |
| WIASRD | Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIA reporting system) |
| WIB | Workforce Investment Board |
| WoRC | Work Readiness Component: replaced the JOBS (Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Act) as the employment component of welfare reform. |
| WOTC | Work Opportunity Tax Credit |
| WSD | Workforce Services Division |

Attachment G:

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronyms – Words formed from the initial letters or parts of words.

Act – Means the Workforce Investment Act of 1998(WIA) or Public Law (PL) 105-220. A new, customer focused comprehensive workforce system (One-Stop System) to help Americans access the tools they need to manage their careers through information and high quality services, and to help U. S. companies find skilled workers.

Adult – An individual who is age 18 or older. (PL 105-220)

Adult Basic Education (ABE) -- Education for adults whose inability to read, write or speak English or to effectively use mathematics is a barrier to their ability to get or keep employment. ABE is designed to improve their ability to benefit from training and improve their opportunities for employment and to meet adult responsibilities.

Adult Secondary Education Skills -- Education for adults consisting of courses in mathematics, reading, history, science, government, language arts, and other courses and classes that lead to a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) Certificate.

Advanced Training/Occupational Skills Training – applies to youth and means an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. Such training should be outcome oriented and focused on a long-term goal as specified in the ISS and result in attainment of a certificate as defined this glossary. (Added 12-15-06)

Affirmative Action – Specific results-oriented policy and procedures through which an agency commits itself to every good faith effort to correct deficiencies in the equitability with which it serves significant segments of its eligible population.

Alternative Education programs – is defined as a separate program within a K-12 public school district or charter school established to serve and provide youth a choice or option whose needs are not being met in the traditional school setting. The goal of an alternative school should be to:

1. Facilitate academic growth through career exploration and cross-curricular activities within a diverse learning community;
2. Encourage students to attend by choice;
3. Be responsive to unmet local needs; and
4. Ensure the student body reflects the racial and soci-economic mix of the community.

Some examples of schools include:

Alternative high schools
specialty boarding schools
residential treatment centers for substance abuse
behavior modification centers
wilderness treatment schools

juvenile boot camp schools

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – A federal law providing for comprehensive civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities in areas of employment, public accommodations, state and local government services and telecommunications. (PL101-336).

America's Job Bank (AJB) -- A website where job seekers can post their resumes and search for job openings. Employers can post job listings in the nation's largest online labor exchange, create customized job orders, and search resumes. **NOTE:** USDOL announced that it will no longer support AJB after July 1, 2007.

Application - The process which requires the physical attainment of all necessary eligibility documentation regarding citizenship, age, income, selective service registration (if applicable) plus basic skills assessment for math and reading levels. Upon completion of eligibility determination, and signing of the application, eligible participants are placed into the applicant pool for consideration for enrollment into intensive services.

Apprenticeship Training -- A program combining on-the-job training with related instruction that enables workers to master the practical and technical skills required for a skilled occupation.

Architectural Barriers – Physical conditions of a building or a facility which reduce the accessibility to or usefulness of such a building or facility to individuals with physical disabilities.

Asian -- A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Barriers to Employment -- Conditions that may make employment difficult for certain individuals. Individuals with such barriers may include: single parents, displaced homemakers, youth, public assistance recipients, older workers, substance abusers, teenage parents, veterans, ethnic minorities, and those with limited English speaking ability or a criminal record or with a lack of education, work experience, credentials, transportation or child care arrangements.

Basic Literacy Skills -- Reading, writing, mathematics, problem solving and interpersonal skills training that enable adults to communicate in English, use math, obtain a high school diploma or GED and become productive, employable citizens.

Basic Skills Deficient – An individual has English reading, writing, or computing skill at or below the eighth grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or a comparable score on a criterion-referenced test.

Case Management – A client-centered approach in delivery of services, designed to: Prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, identifying barriers to participation and employment; devise service strategies for participants to ensure access to workforce investment activities and supportive services, using, where feasible, computer-based technologies; and Assist in the enrollment of participants into allowable activities designed to enhance employability (i.e. motivation, assessment, job preparation workshops, educational classes and/or training, and/or employment services), providing job development and placement services, and assisting individuals and

families in accessing community services, addressing emergency assistance and crisis intervention and immediate needs (i.e. food, housing, clothing, and transportation); and
Provide job and career counseling during program participation and after job placement.

Certificate - A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation. These technical or occupational skills are based on standards developed or endorsed by employers. Work readiness certificates are not included in this definition. (Common measures definition)

A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of technical or occupational skills by:

1. A state educational agency or a state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a state.
2. An institution of higher education described in Section 102 of the Higher Education Act (20 USC 1002) that is qualified to participate in the student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV of that Act. This includes community colleges, proprietary schools, and all other institutions of higher education that are eligible to participate in federal student financial aid programs.
3. A professional, industry, or employer organization (e.g., National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence certification, National Institute for Metalworking Skills, Inc., Machining Level I credential) or a product manufacturer or developer (e.g., Microsoft Certified Database Administrator, Certified Novell Engineer, Sun Certified Java Programmer) using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities.
4. A registered apprenticeship program.
5. A public regulatory agency, upon an individual's fulfillment of educational, work experience, or skill requirements that are legally necessary for an individual to use in occupational or professional title or to practice an occupation or profession (e.g., FAA aviation mechanic certification, state certified asbestos inspector).
6. A program that has been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer education benefits to veterans and other eligible persons.
7. Job Corps centers that issue certificates.
8. Institutions of higher education which is formally controlled, or has been formally sanctioned, or chartered, by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes.

Chief Elected Official – The chief elected executive officer (or the individuals designated) of a unit of general local government in a local area.

Client-centered – Services and improvements to the system are made based on customer feedback.

Collocate – Several partner agencies located in a single customer friendly, functionally integrated site intended to provide customers with seamless access to WIA core, intensive and training services, and access to other services.

Community Based Organization (CBO) -- A non-profit organization that originates and is developed locally to serve the needs of the community in which it is based. Services provided are varied and can include health, education, housing, and employment training. A Community Based Organizations is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and that has demonstrated expertise and effectiveness in the field of workforce investment.

Community (Community System) – The area surrounding and including one or more cities and towns that service providers residing in that area have historically served.

Community Management Team (CMT) – Group of One-Stop partners cooperatively planning WIA services in a community system.

Core Services – Services available to all customers (universal access) of the One-Stop Center or affiliate partner agency. Core services include self-help services and services requiring minimal staff assistance as described under Section 134 (d) (2) of the Act. **Note:** When staff assistance is required to provide supportive services to Core service participants, registration is required and counted for performance measurement purposes.

Core Training -- Employment-focused interventions, which address basic vocational skills deficiencies that prevent the participant from accessing appropriate jobs and/or occupations.

Counseling – Staff provision of information and advice to a customer for the purpose of helping the customer make wise choices about education, training, and career services.

Credentials - A credential is a nationally recognized degree or certificate or state recognized credential. Credentials include, but are not limited to, a high school diploma, GED, or other recognized equivalents, post-secondary degrees/certificates, recognized skill standards, licensure or industry-recognized certificates (i.e., ASE car repair, Hazmat, CAN, CDL, Boiler Operator, Flag Person, Heavy Equipment Operator, etc.), and all state education agency recognized credentials. (This definition applies to current WIA statutory adult, older youth and dislocated worker measures only it does not apply to the common measures).

Customer - Under WIA (Workforce Investment Act) definitions, a Customer is any person seeking assistance to find employment or training, whether employed or unemployed, and employers who need qualified workers for their company or training for the workers who are already employed with them.

Customized Training

Training that is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (including a group of employers);

Training that is conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ an individual on successful completion of the training; and

Training for which the employer pays for not less than 50 percent of the cost of training.

The training may occur at the employer's site or may be provided by a training vendor able to meet the employer's requirements. Such training usually requires a commitment from the employer to hire a specified number of trainees who satisfactorily complete the training.

Disabled Veteran -- A veteran who is entitled to compensation under laws administered by the Veterans Administration, or an individual who was discharged or released from active duty because of service-connected disability.

Disadvantaged Adults -- Educationally or skills disadvantaged adults are those persons who score below 8th grade level on standardized tests. They required educational assistance to bring their basic skills to a

level that would make them eligible for secondary (high school) education or to hold a job with basic English and math skills.

Dislocated Worker – An individual who:

- (A)(i) has been terminated or laid off from their job, or who received a notice of termination or layoff, from their employer; (ii)(I) is eligible for or has exhausted their unemployment payments; or (II) has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate, to the appropriate entity at a one-stop center referred to in section 134(c), attachment to the workforce, but can not get unemployment compensation because of low earnings or having done work for an employer not covered under a State unemployment compensation law; and (iii) is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation;
- (B)(i) has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at, a plant, facility or enterprise; (ii) is employed at a facility which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days; or (iii) for purpose of eligibility to receive services other than training services described in section 134(d)(4), intensive services described in section 134(d)(3) or supportive services, is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close;
- (C) was self-employed(including employment as a farmer, rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community in which the individual resides or because of natural disasters; or
- (D) is a displaced homemaker. (WIA Section 101(9))

Displaced Homemaker (for Dislocated Worker Purposes) – An individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and who - -

Has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; and

Is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Displaced Homemaker (State-funded Program) – Refer to manual Section 3.30.

DOL, USDOL – The U.S. Department of Labor, including its agencies and organizational units.

Economic Development Agencies – Local planning and zoning commissions or boards, community development agencies, and other local agencies and institutions responsible for regulating, promoting, or assisting in local economic development.

Eligible Provider – The term “eligible provider”, used with respect to:

Training services, means an organization, such as a public or private college and university, or community-based organization whose application has been approved for the State list of training services as identified under section 122 (e) (3) of the Act;

Intensive services, means a provider who is identified or awarded a contract as described under section 134 (d) (3) (B) of the Act;

Youth activities, means a provider who is awarded a grant or a contract under section 123 of the Act; or

Other workforce investment activities, means a public or private entity selected to be responsible for such activities, such as a one-stop operator designated or certified under section 121 (d) of the Act.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) –A statewide collection of providers that are approved to give services through the One-Stop system. These lists contain consumer information, including cost and

performance information for each of the providers, so that participants can make informed choices on where to use their **Individual Training Accounts**.

Employed (Status at registration) – An employed individual is currently working as a paid employee or who works in his or her own businesses or profession or on his or her own farm, or works 15 hours or more per week as an unpaid worker on a farm or in an enterprise operated by a member of the family, or is one who is not working, but has a job or business from which he or she was temporarily absent because of illness, bad weather, vacation, labor-management dispute, or personal reasons, whether or not paid by the employer for time-off, and whether or not seeking another job. (WIA WISARD, Item 115)

Employment and Training Activity – An activity described in section 134 of the Act that is carried out for an adult or dislocated worker.

Employment Service -- The state level organization or public labor exchange system connected with DOL's United States Employment Service.

English as a Second Language (ESL) – English language education for adults whose inability to understand, speak, read, or write the English language is a barrier to their ability to get or keep employment. This also has effects on their real ability to function in society or successfully complete the citizenship application process.

ETA, DOL -- Employment and Training Administration, the part of DOL with direct responsibility for WIA programs.

Exit – The term program exit means a participant does not receive a service funded by the program or funded by a partner program for **ninety (90)** consecutive calendar days and is not scheduled for future services.

FAIM Coordinator – The employee of the County Office of Public Assistance who will determine eligibility for Pathways, help participants develop the Family Investment Agreement (FIA), monitor those agreements and make referrals to other appropriate programs.

Faith Based Organization (FBO) -- Organization whose founding, governance, or membership is derived from a religious institution or religiously-affiliated entity.

Family – Two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or decree of court, who are living in a single residence, and are included in one or more to the following categories:

A husband, wife, and dependent children.

A parent or guardian and dependent children.

A husband and wife.

Families Achieving Independence in Montana (FAIM) – The Welfare Reform Project in Montana administered by the Montana Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) which began in February 1996.

Family Literacy Services (FLS) -- Services that are sufficient to make lasting changes in a family, and that integrate all of the following activities: (1) literacy activities between parents and their children; (2) training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the

education of their children; (3) parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and (4) an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

Follow-up Activities -- The tracking of what happens to participants when they leave the WIA program for a period of 180 days after first job placement. The reporting requirements include the following information: employment status (number of Entered Employments/Placements at 180 days after program has ended), average hourly wage (earnings change at 180 days after program has ended), and job retention (of those enrolled in training, provide number of those still employed in trained occupation at 180 days after program has ended).

GED -- General Equivalency Diploma. A high school equivalency diploma, which is obtained by passing the General Educational Diploma Equivalency Test that, measures skills and knowledge generally associated with four years of traditional high school instruction.

Governor – The chief executive of a state.

Grant – An award of WIA financial assistance by the U.S. Department of Labor to an eligible WIA recipient.

Grantee – The direct recipient of grant funds from the DOL. A grantee may also be referred to as a recipient.

Hispanic or Latino/a -- A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP) - A plan developed by an adult or dislocated worker program participant and the case manager to identify the participant's employment goals, the appropriate achievement objectives, and the appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.

Individual with a Disability

In general. An individual with any disability (as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12'02)).

Individuals with Disabilities. More than one individual with a disability.

Individual Service Strategy (ISS) – An agreement of skills and goals decided between a WIA Youth participant and WIA Youth staff counselor (usually a case manager), that sets out a plan for the participant to make progress towards his/her educational and employment goals.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) – An expenditure account established on behalf of an eligible participant in WIA Title IB adult and dislocated worker programs to purchase training services from eligible providers they select in consultation with the case manager, counselor or coordinator.

Initial Assessment – To determine whether the program can benefit the individual (suitability) and identify activities and services that would be appropriate, an assessment of the participant is necessary. Initial assessment is part of the overall intake process and includes the initial determination of each participant's employability, aptitudes, abilities and interests, through interviews, testing and counseling.

Intake - The process of collecting basic information which is commonly collected by all program partners (e.g., name, address, phone number, SSN) and all required activities up to the decision of eligibility or ineligibility for an individual program.

Intensive Services – Services available to adults and dislocated workers who have completed one or more Core Services and are still unable to gain employment OR who are employed and have been determined in need of services to get a better job in order to gain self-sufficiency. Intensive Services include individual career planning, resume preparation, job clubs, career counseling, internships, and comprehensive assessments. Basic education, ESL, and basic computer literacy are also sometimes considered intensive. **Note:** All participants in intensive services must be registered and are counted for performance measurement purposes.

Job Development -- The process of marketing a program participant to employers, including informing employers about what the participant can do and asking for a job interview for that individual with the employer.

JobLINC - The common identifier and 'logo' selected for use in marketing under the One-Stop Implementation grant. To display the JobLINC registered logo, locations must participate in the Community Management Team (CMT) in their communities and, at a minimum, commit to provide core informational services from the location where the logo is displayed.

Job Placement Services – Services that specifically assist participants find jobs that may involve activities such as job search assistance, training, or job development.

Job Retention -- The ability to keep a job for a certain period of time, usually 90 or 180 days or more, which shows that a worker has the skills to fit into the workplace and succeed in a job.

Labor Exchange -- Services provided to job seekers and employers by the State Employment Service Agencies. Services to job seekers may include assessment, testing, counseling, provision of labor market information and referral to prospective employers. Employer service may include accepting job orders, screening applicants, referring qualified applicants and providing follow-up.

Labor Force -- The total of all civilians classified as employed and unemployed and members of the Armed Forces stationed in the United States. (Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin 2175).

Labor Market Area – an economically integrated geographic area within which individuals can reside and find employment within a reasonable distance or can readily change employment without changing their residence. Such an area shall be identified in accordance with criteria used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor in defining such areas or similar criteria established by a Governor.

Labor Market Information – Labor Market Information (LMI) must be provided to participants in every program. LMI generally involves four major areas of information, which include national job trends (including supply and demand), local job opportunities, education and skill requirements for jobs, and job seeking skills (writing resumes, job interview techniques, etc.).

Life Skills -- Those skills which are included in adult literacy dealing with such topics as consumer economics, government and law, occupational knowledge, community resources, and health that are included into an educational agency's basic literacy skills course of study.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) -- An individual with LEP is one who has limited ability in speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language **and**
(a) whose native language is a language other than English **or**
(b) who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language

Literacy -- An individual's ability to (1) read, write, and speak in English, and (2) compute and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary (at or above the 8th grade level as measured on a generally accepted standardized test) to function on the job, in the family, and in society.

Local Area – The local workforce investment area(s) designated by a Governor for delivery of WIA services.

Local Board or Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) – The local workforce investment board established in each local area of a State.

Lower Living Standard Income Level – The income level (adjusted for regional, metropolitan, urban, and rural differences and family size) determined annually by the Secretary of Labor based on the most recent lower living family budget issued by the Secretary.

Low-income Individual – The term “low-income individual” means a person who:

1. receives, or is a member of a family that receives, cash payments under a Federal, State, or local income-based public assistance program;
2. received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income, for the 6-month period before application for the program involved (besides unemployment compensation, child support payments, payments described in subparagraph (A), and old-age and survivors insurance benefits received under section 202 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402) that, for their family size, is not more than the higher of—
 - (i) the poverty line, for an equivalent period; or
 - (ii) 70 percent of the lower living standard income level, for a similar period;
3. belongs to a household that receives (or has been decided within the 6-month period before application for the program to be eligible to receive) food stamps according to the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);
4. is a homeless person, as defined in subsections (a) and (c) of section 103 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302);
5. is a foster child for whom State or local government payments are made; or
6. in cases permitted by rules decided by the Secretary of Labor, is a person with a disability whose own income meets the requirements of a program described in subparagraph (1) or of subparagraph (2), but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet such requirements.

Migrant or Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) -- A migrant farm worker, a migrant processing worker, or a seasonal worker.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander -- A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Island.

Needs-Related Payments – Payments established in WIA 134(e)(3) for WIA Title IB Adult participants who are:

Unemployed

Do not qualify or ceased receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI)

Enrolled in training services (WIA 134(d)(4)(D))

Needs-related payments are provided to individual participants in cases where such payments are necessary to enable individuals to participate in a training program funded by the Workforce Investment Act and further defined in this policy manual.

Nepotism – When a person employs or appoints a family member. Refer to Section 1.30 of this manual.

Nontraditional Employment – Refers to occupations or fields of work for which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25 percent of the individuals employed in each such occupation or field of work.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) -- Establishes Transitional Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for workers in companies affected by imports from Mexico or Canada or by shifts of U.S. production to those countries.

Occupational Skills Training -- Includes both (1) vocational education which is designed to provide individuals with the technical skills and information required to perform a specific job or group of jobs, and (2) on-the-job training.

Offender -- Any adult or youth who has been involved, at any stage, in the criminal justice process that may benefit from services under WIA Title IB programs and requires assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment from an arrest or conviction.

O*NET – The Occupational Information Network for use matching the title of an occupation with its 5 or 6-digit occupational code (<http://online.onetcenter.org/>).

Older Individual – An individual age 55 or older.

On-site Industry-specific Training -- This is training which is specific to the needs of a particular employer and/or industry. Participants may be trained according to requirements developed by an employer for a job site. There may be an agreement to hire participants who have successfully completed training.

On-the-job Training – Training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while Engaged in productive work in a job that:
Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of job;
Provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant, for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and the additional supervision related to the training; and
Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained; taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.

One-Stop Center -- Under the **Workforce Investment Act**, every local System must have at least one comprehensive Center. A One-Stop Center is a facility that makes a wide range of the system's services

available at a single site, through self-service or with staff help. The number of centers, the services offered and the manner in which they are given will vary from one area to another, according to local needs and resources.

One-Stop Operator – One or more entities designated or certified under section 121(d) of the Act. One-stop operators are responsible for the operations and the coordination of all activities in a one-stop center.

One-Stop Partner – The term “one-stop partner” means:

An entity described in section 121(b) (1) of the Act; and

An entity described in section 121(b) (2) of the Act that is participating in the operation of a one-stop delivery system.

Any entity/individual participating in the activities of a Community Management Team (CMT).

One-Stop System -- The network of **workforce** products and services that meets business and jobseeker needs in whatever manner and location is most effective and convenient for the customer. Customers can choose to use the system's products and services in different ways. They may call a toll-free number or connect through a personal computer at home or in a neighborhood library. They may receive individualized assistance in a community-based agency, an educational institution, or a one-stop career center. The one-stop system is often described as a “seamless system of service delivery”. Information and access to services are available to customers regardless of which partner site is entered. All partners have an obligation to provide the core informational services so that individuals may access the one-stop system regardless of where they enter, including information regarding access or linkages to intensive services, training services and the programs and activities carried out by all of the One-stop partners.

Out-of-school Youth – The term “out-of-school youth” means:

An eligible youth who is a school dropout; or

An eligible youth who has received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent is basic skills deficient, unemployed, or underemployed.

Outreach – An effort by program staff to encourage individuals in the service delivery area to use the program services. Outreach efforts also involve the collection, publication and dissemination of information on program services available in the community system to assure universal access to core services including eligibility information for services beyond core services.

Participant – An individual who has been determined to be eligible to participate in and who is receiving services (except follow-up services authorized under this title) under a program authorized by this title. Participation shall be deemed to commence on the first day, following determination of eligibility, on which the individual began receiving subsidized employment, training, or other services provided under this title.

Pathways – A time-limited cash assistance program designed to provide families with opportunities leading to self-sufficiency. Eligibility is generally limited to 24 months of assistance.

Pattern of OJT Contract Failure – Any employer who has had two or more WIA funded OJT contracts that have failed to provide the OJT participant with continued, long-term employment with wages and working conditions at the same level and to the same extent as other similarly situated employees shall be ineligible to enter into further WIA OJT contracts. Dismissal of OJT participant for ‘just cause’ or due to

economic factors that impact the employer or additional employees shall not constitute a pattern of failure.

Placement -- The act of obtaining unsubsidized employment for or by a participant.

Pre-apprenticeship Training -- Any training designed to increase or upgrade specific academic, or physical skills required as a condition for entry into a specific type of work.

Pre-enrollment Assessment -- A process to determine the employability and training needs of participants before enrolling them into the program. Individual factors considered during pre-enrollment assessment include: a judgment of vocational interests, abilities, previous education and work experience, income requirements, and personal circumstances.

Priority of Service: WIA says that in the event that funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities under 133(b) are limited, priority shall be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals for intensive services and training services. **WIA Sec. (134(d)(2)(E))**

Postsecondary Educational Institution – An institution of higher education, as defined in section 481 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U. S. C. 1088).

Poverty Line – The poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget, and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U. S. C. 9902 (2)) applicable to a family of the size involved.

Provider Agreement – The contractual agreement between the Statewide Workforce Programs and Oversight Bureau and providers of services for WIA and other funds and activities of which the Bureau is the administrative entity.

Public Assistance – Federal, State or Local government support provided to families for which eligibility is determined by a needs or income test. Includes TANF, childcare, food stamps, housing assistance, work subsidies, and allowances or other cash payments to meet living expenses.

Rapid Response Activity – Early intervention services provided by the state or by an agency chosen by the state in case of a factory closing, a natural or other disaster that causes job loss for large numbers of workers, in order to assist dislocated workers in obtaining reemployment as soon as possible. Rapid response is an activity provided by the State, or by an entity designated by the State under section 134(a) (1) (A) of the Act, in the case of a permanent closure or mass layoff at a plant, facility, or enterprise, or a natural or other disaster, that results in mass job dislocation, in order to assist dislocated workers in obtaining reemployment as soon as possible, with services including:

The establishment of onsite contact with employers and with employee representatives:

- a. Immediately after the state is notified of a current or projected permanent Closure or mass layoff;
or
- b. In the case of a disaster, immediately after the state is made aware of mass Job dislocation as a result of such disaster;
2. The provision of information and access to available employment and training activities;

3. Assistance in establishing a labor-management committee, voluntarily agreed to by labor and management, with the ability to devise and implement a strategy assessing the employment and training needs of dislocated workers and obtaining services to meet such needs;
4. The provision of emergency assistance adapted to the particular closure, layoff, disaster; and
5. The provision of assistance to the local community in developing a coordinated response and in obtaining access to state economic development assistance.

Recipient – An entity to which a WIA grant is awarded directly from Department of Labor to carry out a program under Title I of WIA. The State is the recipient of funds awarded under WIA sections 127(b)(1)(C)(I)(II), 132(b)(1)(B) and 132(b)(2)(B). The recipient is the entire legal entity that received the award and is legally responsible for carrying out the WIA program, even if only a particular component of the entity is designated in the grant award document.

Registration – The process for collecting information for supporting a determination of eligibility.

Adult: Adults who receive services funded under Title I.B. of WIA other than self-service or informational activities must be registered and determined eligible for Intensive Services. The process of registration is designed to signal when an individual is counted against core measures of performance in Title I programs. Programs do not need to register participants until they receive a core service beyond those that are self-service or informational. This point in time also corresponds to the point where participants are counted for performance measurement purposes. When staff assistance is required to provide supportive services through core services, registration in core services is required.

Dislocated Worker: The same as Adult registration with the addition of Rapid Response. Individuals who participate in Rapid Response may be registered if they complete an initial assessment that indicates intensive services are necessary. Rapid Response meets the requirement for gateway services.

Youth: The first step is to determine if the participant is eligible after providing the participant with necessary eligibility information, eligibility documentation has been provided, the application process has been completed, and the individual has been determined eligible to participate.

Rehabilitation services -- Services provided by a licensed or authorized professional in accordance with an individualized plan of care intended to improve or maintain a client's quality of life and optimal capacity for self-care. Services include physical and occupational therapy, speech pathology, and low-vision training.

Release of Information - State and federal privacy laws were enacted to safeguard an individual's privacy from the misuse of federal and state records and to provide individuals access to their records. Access to files should be granted on a "need to know" basis. If other agencies, prospective employers, or other individuals request access to information in a file, authorization of release for the information should be obtained from the participant. Access to the records from other agencies may also require authorization for release of information.

Remedial Education -- Educational instruction, particularly in basic skills, intended to raise an individual's general competency level in order to succeed in vocational education, or skills training programs, or employment.

Resume -- The basic document that shows a job candidate's employment and academic qualifications, and history of employment. It is a requirement to apply for most jobs and an opportunity to show why the candidate is best suited for the job being applied for.

Retention -- Continuing or keeping a job, usually for at least 90 days or more.

Reverse Referral – An employer may refer individuals to service providers for consideration of developing an OJT contract with the following criteria: (1) Individual is eligible for WIA intensive and training services; (2) Individual's IEP assessment demonstrates OJT as an appropriate training activity; (3) Service Provider assess all current WIA participants for referral to OJT employer; and (4) Employer understands that they may or may not see the individual they referred, and that the service provider may refer additional WIA participants for the employer's consideration for hire under the OJT program.

School Dropout – An individual who is no longer attending any school and who has not received a secondary school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED).

Self-Certification – An individual's signed attestation that the information he/she submits to demonstrate eligibility for a program under Title I of WIA is true and accurate.

Self-Sufficiency – The ability to earn enough money to support oneself.

Self-Sufficiency for adults is defined as:

Meeting basic expenses (such as housing, transportation, food, clothing, health care, savings, and taxes) without subsidies;

Independence from federal, state and local government assistance, with access to affordable health care;

A wage of at least \$9.90 per hour (\$20,590 annually for an individual based on the northwest policy center "living wage" study and adjusted for inflation which will occur annually). The wage per hour is based on a single full-time job of 32-40 hours per week.

Self-sufficiency for Dislocated Workers is defined as having a re-employment wage that is equal to the individual's layoff wage or wages and benefits which meet or exceed the Adult Self-Sufficiency definition whichever is higher.

Social Security Number (SSN) – The 9-digit identification number assigned to an individual by the Social Security Administration under the Social Security Act.

Release of Information - State and federal privacy laws were enacted to safeguard an individual's privacy from the misuse of federal and state records and to provide individuals access to their records. Access to files should be granted on a "need to know" basis. If other agencies, prospective employers, or other individuals request access to information in a file, authorization of release for the information should be obtained from the participant. Access to the records from other agencies may also require authorization for release of information.

Subsidies -- Cash assistance or similar payments for transportation, housing, food or other basic expenses.

Substance Abuser -- An individual dependent on alcohol or drugs, whose dependency results in a significant barrier to employment.

Release of Information - State and federal privacy laws were enacted to safeguard an individual's privacy from the misuse of federal and state records and to provide individuals access to their records. Access to files should be granted on a "need to know" basis. If other agencies, prospective employers, or other individuals request access to information in a file, authorization of release for the information

should be obtained from the participant. Access to the records from other agencies may also require authorization for release of information.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – A type of public assistance authorized pursuant to a state plan approved under the Social Security Act, Title XVI. It is a federal income maintenance program for the aged, blind and disabled, and it is based on need.

Supportive Services (fringe benefits) – Services that are needed to help a person to participate in job training or job search. Supportive services may include transportation, health care, financial assistance, drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, individual and family counseling, special services and materials for individuals with disabilities, job coaches, child care and dependent care, temporary shelter, financial counseling, and other reasonable expenses required for participation in the program and may be provided in-kind or through cash assistance.

In addition to providing supportive services during a participant's participation in WIA activities, they may also be provided for up to 12 months while participant is receiving follow-up services.

TANF -- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families is a federal program providing cash, medical or food assistance for parents and children.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) -- Trade Adjustment Assistance service and allowances provided for achieving reemployment of adversely affected workers, including TRA, training, and other re-employment services, and job search allowance and relocation allowances.

Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) -- A weekly allowance payable to an affected worker with respect to such worker's unemployment.

Training Services - The education and employment training services to be offered at no cost to One-Stop system customers who have been unable to get a job after having received one or more core services and one or more intensive services (see also **Individual Training Account -- ITA**). **Note:** All participants in training services must be registered and are counted for performance measurement purposes.

Unemployed Individual – An individual who is without a job and who wants to and is available for work. The determination of whether an individual is without a job shall be made in accordance with the criteria used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor in defining individuals as unemployed.

Universal Services--Services available to every individual through the One-Stop system without regard to any specific eligibility criteria, including information about job vacancies, career options, employment trends, job search techniques, resume writing, and access to the employment training provider lists.

Unobligated Obligations – The portion of funds authorized by the Federal agency that has not been obligated by the grantee and is determined by deducting the cumulative obligations from the cumulative funds authorized.

Unsubsidized Employment -- A job for which wages are paid directly by the employer and that is not subsidized through any government program.

Vendor – An entity responsible for providing generally required goods or services to be used in the WIA program. These goods or services may be for the recipient's or subrecipient's (i.e., service providers) own use or for the use of participants in the program.

Veteran – Related definition - -

Veteran - An individual who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released from such service under conditions other than dishonorable.

Recently **Separated Veteran** – Any veteran who applies for participation under this title within 48 months after the discharge or release from active military, naval, or air service.

Vocational Exploration Training -- A process to find out, by testing or counseling, what job occupations will best fit a customer's abilities and needs.

Wagner-Peyser – Employment Service programs – Employment Service basic labor exchange and other services funding source. Employment Services are provided in the Montana Job Service Workforce Centers located across the State.

Welfare and/or Public Assistance Recipient -- A person who, during the course of the program year, receives or is a member of a family who receives cash welfare or public assistance payments under a Federal, State, or local welfare program.

Work Experience – A temporary activity (six months or less) which provides a person with the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to perform a job, including work habits and behaviors, and which may be combined with classroom or other training. Work experience is an authorized activity for WIA Adult, Dislocated Workers or Youth participants.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 – An Act of the United States Congress to establish programs to prepare youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force and to give job training to those economically disadvantaged individuals and other individuals who face serious barriers to employment and who are in need of such training to obtain prospective employment. Workforce Investment titles include:

Title I Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker services

IB – Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth

IC – Job Corps

ID – Native American, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker, Veterans, etc.

Title II Adult Basic Education

Title III Wagner-Peyser (Employment Service)

Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

Title V General Provisions

Workforce Investment Activity – The array of activities permitted under Title I of WIA, which include employment and training activities for adults and dislocated workers, as described in WIA section 134, and youth activities as described in WIA section 129.

Workforce Investment Board (State) – The State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) established under section 111 of the Act. The State Board serves as an advisory to the Governor and develops the State plan and oversees how it is carried out.

Youth – In the WIA program, any young person, between the age of 14 and 21 years of age, who may be in school or out-of-school, and whose family income is within the WIA Low Income Guidelines.

Youth Activity – An activity described in section 129 of the Act that is carried out for eligible youth (or as described in section 129(c) (5)).

Youth Council – The term “youth council” means a council established under section 117(h) of the Act.

ATTACHMENT H:

Single Statewide Planning Area Workforce System Organizational Chart

